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When the Morning Wakens

MALCOLM JAMES MacLEOD

When the Morning Wakens

BY

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WHEN THE MORNING WAKENS
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WHEN THE MORNING WAKENS

"But Sweeter Far Thy Face to See"

> "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better."
>
> *Philippians* 1:21.

And perhaps Moffat's translation is clearer, "I cannot tell which to choose, life or death: I am in a dilemma: my strong desire is to depart and be with Christ for that is far the best. But for your sakes it is necessary I should live on here below." I like that word dilemma. "I'm in a dilemma." Sometimes I think I'd prefer to die, sometimes I want to live. Of course dying is better, because it means being with Christ, but then again for your sakes I am anxious to live on and try and do some good in the world.

Well, that is the spirit of the Apostle as he writes to the Philippian Christians, and isn't it a wonderful spirit? Can you picture anything finer? Where is there anything just like it? No Mohammedan says,

I have a desire to depart and be with Mohammed. I am told there is a Buddhist hymn which begins:

"Buddha, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly."

But it's a mighty poor plagiarism and anyway it soon dies away in the stark emptiness of Nirvana.

Remember he was a prisoner when he penned these words, a prisoner in Rome, with the very worst likely to happen. But we do not get that information from him. He makes no reference to it at all. He doesn't ask any pity on that score. He is not playing the sympathy game. Paul never capitalizes his misfortunes. He was waiting for the word of the Emperor telling whether it was to be life or Nero's axe. But that did not trouble him a particle. He was ready for either life or the axe. He has often been compared with Hamlet, but the comparison is not well taken. Hamlet was crushed by the frightful discovery that his uncle had murdered his father and then married his mother. And with this burden weighing on his mind, life becomes intolerable, and he cries out:

"To be or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them."

Who would bear all the vexations and wrongs and rebuffs of life when they can put an end to them? With Hamlet life is a dreadful thing and death is

dreadful too. Life is bad and it is quite possible death may be worse. That's Hamlet. That is not Paul's perplexity at all. We never hear Paul haranguing on the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, never. With Paul life is a divine thing, a sublime thing, a glorious thing, and death more glorious. Hamlet regards life and death as evils and does not know which evil to choose. Paul regards both as blessings and he cannot decide which blessing to elect. So he is face to face with a great alternative. The one would keep him in a work which he had learned to love; the other would bring him to a holy fellowship which he had learned to long for.

The Apostle was none of your gloomy mopers. He was no morbid hypochondriac. There were too many beautiful things to do in the world, too much to live for, too many good causes to help, too many souls to cheer. He never asked that old stale question, Is life worth living? Nobody does ever ask that question but a trifler. He knew that life was well worth living to him who has real worth in his make-up and a real purpose and a real passion and a real hope.

It is not that life in this world is not good; it is good; good and great and glorious. He loved life; he loved his work; he loved his message; he loved his churches; he loved his friends. "'Tis good," he thought, "to be a child of God in training for a better country." And yet with all its joy and blessedness and areas of service, life is not to be compared with death: it is better to be where all our hopes are fulfilled. Death is the real prize. Death is a gain.

It must be confessed there are not many who feel thuswise to-day. There are of course the old and infirm who look forward longingly to the end. There are those in pain praying most earnestly that the good Lord would grant them deliverance. There are many in the vast army of the discouraged and disillusioned who are willing to own up, "I'm tired and sick of it all." But how many in good health and happy in their work do we see who are ready to say, "I would rather go home and be with God"? Not many, I venture. 'Twould be an abnormal thing. Life to most of us is sweet and pleasant and enjoyable and desirable.

I think one reason for this wonderful attitude on the part of the Apostle was the man's feeling of certainty. He was so amazingly sanguine. The future to him was not a matter of speculation or haze or bewilderment or fog: it wasn't a leap in the dark. It was not a happy guess. He was supremely and unqualifiedly confident. Many things were doubtful but not this. Death was a going to Christ. Christ Himself had said: "I go to prepare a place for you." And the Apostle believed the promise and clung to it with every tendril of his being. There was no question in his mind on that point, no vagueness. It was not a blind bargain. He was just as sure of the other life as of this. When he crossed the Great Divide he believed that the first person to greet him would be his Master. There wasn't the shadow of the shadow of a doubt on that score. Death to the Apostle was not a "melting into the infinite azure." It was not a going to "join the choir invisible." Nor was it the absorption of the

drop in the ocean. It was a clear, definite, personal, eternal companionship with Jesus Christ.

I recall the story of a physician who was visiting one of his patients. And as he was leaving, the sick man said: "Doctor, am I going to get well?" The doctor was a Christian but he hesitated and said, "Well, you're a pretty sick man." And the dying man took him by the hand and whispered, "I don't want to die: tell me what lies on the other side." The doctor quietly answered, "My dear sir, I wish I could tell you but I do not know." They talked for a moment about the mystery of it all, and then they bade each other good-by. As he opened the door to depart, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with delight. Turning to the patient, the doctor resumed: "Did you observe that? This is my dog. He has never been in this room before: he has never been in this house before. He did not know what was inside here. He knew nothing except that his master was here and so he jumped in without any fear. I cannot tell you what's on the other side, but I know the Master is there —and that is enough. When He opens the door, I expect to pass in without fear to His presence." Is there not a splendid lesson in that story? Heaven is where Jesus is.

Then the Apostle's conception of being with his Lord meant service. His whole idea of the hereafter was that it was to be a life of service. In nearly every letter he wrote he called himself the servant of Jesus Christ. He tried to serve Him here and he expected to serve Him there, day and night in His temple.

His hope was that Christ should be magnified in his body whether the magnifying was to be brought about by life or by death. Is it not possible that one reason why so many to-day are losing their grip on the future life is because of the crude imperfect notions of that life that have been entertained? In our childhood heaven was pictured to us as a dull, idle, lazy, dreamy existence. It was an oriental picture. There was nothing in it to fire the imagination or the ambition of a young life. It was a long, never-ending Sabbath of hymn singing and rest, a conception suited especially for the aged. The whole idea was selfish, sluggish, materialistic. Healthy young life would not have it. It did not appeal at all to the children, and remember there are thousands of little children up there. It was not an interesting idea, nor a worthy one, nor a joyful one, for young virile manhood. It was, to say the least, unsatisfying. "I want to be an angel" was a popular hymn some years ago. But then the average young person to-day doesn't take particularly to being an angel. Man asks for a development of all his powers. If the future life will not give us an opportunity for the expansion of all our best hopes, then much of our toil down here is meaningless.

The Apostle's heaven is not that kind of a heaven at all. It is not the heaven of the slothful who know no duty. It is a place of progress, of joyous intensity, a great activity of power and harmony and life. Doing all our work well and doing it with delight. "For me to live is Christ," he says, and to die is Christ, too. It's a remarkable saying, so far-reaching that it is

difficult to crystallize it into a sentence. We fail to get the honey out of it until we realize that this life and the next life are one. They are the same life; the one is just the extension, the enlargement, the fulfillment of the other. For me to live is to know Christ, to love Him, to do His will, to win His approval, to be His law and impulse. Christ was the ruling passion of the man's life. He had won him over body and heart and mind and soul and strength.

Dr. Van Dyke has a book which he calls "The Ruling Passion." But as Henry Drummond was so fond of saying, every life has its ruling passion. Man must love something. It is a necessity of his being. The great Frenchman once said, "If I were cast ashore on a desert island, I would find something to appease the hunger of my heart. It might be a bird or a flower or a tree." The heart of man cries out for some governing affection. Once get hold of a man's ruling incentive and you have the master key to his career. "A man has to live for something if it is only his stomach." What, for instance, was the ruling passion of Peary's life? To reach the North Pole, was it not? What was the ruling passion of Livingstone's life? To help heal the open sore of the world. What of John Howard's life? Prison reform. Or Lord Shaftesbury's? Alleviating the woes of the poor. When Sir John Franklin was a young lad he walked twelve miles one day that he might see the ocean. And from that hour the land lost all its charm. He fell in love with the sea. Henceforth the sea was his passion. Some twenty years ago a Southern negro

wrote a book entitled "Up from Slavery." The man had been born a slave. He did not even know his real name. He called himself Booker Washington. But as he grew up he was consumed with a burning thirst to get an education. He heard of Hampton and started out one day from his little shanty in West Virginia to walk there—a tramp of something like 500 miles. He worked as a laborer along the way, slept on the sidewalk at night, lived on bread and water, and when he reached the promised land some three months later, he had fifty cents in his pocket. They looked him over, told him to go and clean a certain room, and Washington said to himself, "I'll prove to these people that I mean business; I'll make this room so clean that General Armstrong will want me to stay here." The hunger of the man was to know; it was gnawing at his very vitals.

What was the ruling passion of James Chalmers' life? He went out to the South Sea Islands and invested it there. The narrative of his doings in New Guinea gives the reader the spinal chill. He was eaten by the Fly River cannibals and so died a martyr to his faith. What on earth ever possessed him to throw his life away, as some call it, in such a hopeless adventure? The day I read his biography I didn't sleep a wink that night—and you won't either. That missionary mother, parting with her child at Calcutta, knelt on the deck of the steamer, saying, "O Christ, I do this for Thee," and then went back to the jungle to finish her work. That was her ruling passion. It was Chalmers' too. As Tholuck used to say, "I have

but one passion: it is He." There was a brilliant woman in Scotland. Her name was Susan Ferrier. She was a novelist. Some one asked her one day what her greatest wish was, and she answered, "My one wish is that my life may never lose its halo." That was beautifully put, was it not? The deepest cry of the human soul is, What is there worth living for? What is there worth dying for? As Tolstoi puts it:

> "What is there that I can commit myself to, of such a kind that even death does not daunt or dishearten me? What meaning can I put upon life —that will take the sting from sorrow and from even death itself?"

Some one has said, "The bandit demands your money or your life, but Christ demands both."

But of course the really great thought that was in the Apostle's mind was that no experience can be compared with the final joy of being with his Lord forever. No lesson was too hard, no path too lonely or rough, no weight too heavy, no grief too great—if they lead us into His presence. He felt that though he had nothing, yet he possessed all things. He coveted even suffering: "That I may know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings," he adds in the next chapter. Most of us are desirous to avoid suffering. The shadow of it is the cloud which we dread to enter. How many of us pray to be saved from it! But here is a man who longed to share the experiences of Christ's sufferings; the fellowship, he calls it. It was the man's

consuming love. Real love yearns to share in the sufferings of the loved one. Look at that mother bending over her child. She listens to its sobs and moans. How she would love to take that pain and bear it! And the Apostle's love for his Lord was so intense that he longed for fellowship in His sufferings.

Now isn't this a wonderful life-story? How every other impulse pales before it! The man has a message and the message is graven into his very bones. It is not a picture he is looking at. It isn't something from which he backs off and criticizes with cool and nonchalant detachment. It's a reality within him, a fervor, a fire. He has one great certainty. A mighty conviction surged through his soul, eternal life with Jesus Christ. We are living to-day in an age of question; when everything is questioned. One can hardly pick up a volume that doesn't try to disturb one's faith. Half the books that are written are nothing but interrogation points. Many of them, it would seem, go out of their way purposely to slur and slap and slam the faith of our fathers. Instance after instance could be cited. Let us note just one: A book was published a year ago entitled "Garrulities of an Octogenarian." The author has been all his life a publisher. He is now eighty-five years of age. When I looked up my dictionary I found that the meaning of that word garrulity is talking a lot on trivial things. And undoubtedly after reading the book a good deal of it is trivial. But there are two or three chapters on religion, and surely religion is one of those subjects that ought to escape the trivial treatment. Anyway when a man

passes the fourscore landmark he should be beyond the trivial stage. It is an old saying that whenever one starts out to describe Jesus Christ he always ends up by exposing himself, and usually does it unconsciously. Every effort to draw a picture of the Man of Nazareth results in the artist drawing his own portrait.

Now listen to Mr. Holt's creed. I quote his words: "I believe in some sort of a Power but it is neither all mighty nor all good. I believe Jesus Christ was God's son just as you and I are, though in many respects much more to his father's credit. As to the forgiveness of sins, we know there isn't any. As to Christ's burial and resurrection I have no opinion. If such a thing occurred I doubt if he was dead when he was entombed. As to the communion of saints, a good many people who I suppose would be included in that prevent my being anxious to join them. As to coming to judge the quick and the dead, we know that job is going on every day by a power mightier even than Christ's," and so on and so on. He cites with seeming sympathy the case of Mr. Carnegie, whom he familiarly calls Andy, telling him one day that he did not believe that such a man as Jesus Christ ever lived. And then he goes on to add, "I don't know that it makes much difference whether he ever lived or not, so long as Andy without believing it did so much good with his money." And so the author with amazing assurance goes on to brush aside with a hop, skip and a jump the best scholarship, and

the best inheritance, and the best findings of the greatest minds of two thousand years of Christian history.

Side by side with this let us place another confession, and of a different kind. On the morning of Saturday, October 23, 1852, Daniel Webster remarked, "I shall die to-night." When evening came his family were round his bedside. His biographer Curtis was also present and took down his last words and recorded them for us:

> "My general wish on earth has been to do my Master's will. That there is a God all must acknowledge. I see Him in all His wondrous works. Himself how wondrous! What would be the condition of any of us if we had not the hope of immortality? What ground is there to rest upon but the Gospel? There were scattered hopes of immortality among the Jews. There were intimations, crepuscular, twilight. But, but, thank God! The Gospel of Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light, rescued it, brought it to life!" "Then," writes the biographer, "the greatest reasoner this country has produced caused a sacred hush to fall upon the dying chamber, while in a loud firm voice he repeated the Lord's Prayer."

Cecil Spring-Rice was the British Ambassador at Washington the first years of the World War. The night before he gave up his post on account of ill health, which was just one month before he died, sit-

ting in his study at Washington he wrote a little poem of two verses:

"I vow to thee my country all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love—
The love that asks no questions, the love that stands the test,
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

and then in the second verse he goes on to give us the secret of his devotion to England:

"But there's another country I have heard of long ago,
Most dear to those who love her, most great to those who know:
We may not count her army, we may not see her King;
Her fulness is a faithful heart, her prize is suffering;
And solemnly and silently her shining bands increase,
Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."

Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's devotion to his country was because deep down in his heart there was a loyal devotion to that other country. He was a beautiful child-like Christian. How fitting that he should have passed on to his rich reward humming the lines of the familiar hymn:

"When the morning wakens,
Then may I arise
Pure and fresh and sinless
In Thy holy eyes."

"So be my passing,
My task accomplished and the long day done;
My wages taken and in my heart
Some late lark singing;
Let me be gathered to the quiet West,
The sundown splendid and serene."

II

"Follow with Reverent Steps the Great Example"

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Matthew 7:12.

Let us consider the moral ideas of Jesus. And let us put aside for a moment His doctrinal teachings, not in any way meaning thereby to minimize their importance but simply to limit the scope of our inquiry. His doctrines have been discussed and quarreled over for many hundreds of years; they have been denied and defended, and interpreted in a great many ways; but His moral sayings, His ethical teachings have had no challenge. I have never heard of any ill-tempered wrangle over His ethics. There has been almost complete unanimity on its essential facts from the first. These facts have been constant and unchanging. Even such a man as John Stuart Mill confessed that he knew no better way for a man to order his life than the way of Jesus. Could it be proven that His theological tenets were unsound, un-

true, that there was no loving Heavenly Father, no future life, no forgiveness of sins, no virtue in prayer, it would still remain that the rules of conduct which He laid down are the only rules conceivable to make life truly successful and to make men truly happy. By unanimous consent Jesus is the supreme moral authority of the world. To use His own image, the man who conforms his life according to the laws of His Kingdom is building his house upon a rock.

It is worth noting that even a man like Mr. Bernard Shaw admits this. In his preface to "Androcles and the Lion" we find these words: "I am no more a Christian than you are, gentle reader; yet like Pilate I prefer Jesus to Caiaphas and Annas, and I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world and human nature for more than sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way of Christ, if He had undertaken the work of a practical statesman." Indeed, Mr. Shaw is reported as having said that "Christ's name was the only one that came out of the world war with credit."

In studying the ethical teachings of our Lord, we find that His method was to lay down no definite system of rules but rather to state principles. Only on one subject, marriage, did the Master mark out any definite line of action. The wisdom of this can be seen at a glance. Once make the Christian life consist in stated rules, and confusion and uncertainty are bound to follow. The rules, for one thing, will need to be multiplied and amplified as time goes on. New circumstances will call for addenda and new clauses

of interpretation. His teachings consist of great principles that are eternally valid. What He preached was a spirit. He did not deal with institutions but with life. We have a striking illustration of this in His attitude to slavery and political questions. When He lived on this earth more than half the people in the Roman Empire were slaves (perhaps two-thirds). Think of it! A large part of the wealth of Rome was in human beings. And yet never a word did He utter against the monstrous iniquity. What He did do was to lay down certain facts and inculcate a certain spirit that made slavery intolerable. One fact was the value of every human soul. A human life is not a piece of machinery nor a chattel but a child of God.

And the same is true of science and art and culture and politics and industry. Christ has nothing to say directly about these things. And He has nothing to say because there can be no final message on these questions. They are changing all the time, and His appeal is to the unchanging. Different conditions call for different methods. At the beginning of His ministry He said to the seventy, "Carry no purse." But toward the end of it He said, "He that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise a wallet." A particular precept may be for a particular occasion. Critics have tried to stir up warfare between His teaching and science. But this is unfair. His teaching is committed to no scientific formula. It disentangles itself from science altogether. It must be free to expand with the expansion of learning. Each is supreme in its own domain. The spirit of His words is a spirit

of Faith and Love and Hope and Humility and Sacrifice. And these things are preëminent no matter what one's scientific creed may be. We may believe the earth is round or flat or oblong or hexagonal or square, the spiritual verities remain untouched.

I. Now no one verse can cover all the field, but let us take the Golden Rule as our starting point because it embodies the first illustration of what we have in mind. And let us be quite free to confess that it is found in the codes of several ancient people (in China, India and Greece), but always in a negative form. The first great and noteworthy fact about the ethics of Jesus is its positiveness. His followers are to take the initiative in doing as they would desire to be done by. Every blessing that we covet for ourselves we must try and secure for others. A lady said to Dale of Birmingham, "I have been attending your church, Doctor, for three years and nobody has ever spoken to me." She was a member too. She had been a member for three years and nobody had spoken to her. Well, of course that meant that she was equally guilty. She had never spoken to anybody herself. Suppose when you go down town to-morrow you only speak to those who speak to you first. The Golden Rule implies that we are to begin by doing our part. It is not sufficient to crawl into one's own shell. We must do to our fellow men what we would wish them to do to us. We are to see things from the other person's point of view. Some years ago a book was published entitled "Thinking Black." It was written by Dan Crawford, a missionary in Africa. He had

lived for twenty years in the jungle and had learned to think black. He had learned to see things as the black man sees them. The Decalogue is mostly negative, "Thou shalt not." But negative morality never gets us very far. If a boy is forbidden to do a certain thing, that is the very thing that he is most determined to do. Tell him he must not skate on that particular sheet of ice and there is no sheet of ice between here and Hudson Bay so tempting. Forbidding things evokes antagonism Christ's commands are positive, "Thou shalt." For all the law is fulfilled in this "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself."

A great ethical teacher puts the law of Christ in this way, "Act so that you could wish your act to be universal." This was Kant's great postulate. So act that you would be willing for every one to do the same thing under similar circumstances. A man is dishonest. Suppose everybody were dishonest. He lies. Suppose everybody lied. He is two-faced. Suppose everybody were two-faced. If everybody were untrustworthy for a month, what would become of commerce? "I think I'll not go to church this morning." Suppose everybody said that. Nothing but the Golden Rule of Christ will bring in the Golden Age of man—peace and brotherhood and goodwill.

It has been disturbing to some people's faith when they have learned that some of the sayings of Jesus were spoken long before by others. There is no longer any doubt of this, that He borrowed freely from other sources. But why should it be disquieting? It has

been shown how Shakespeare shows his debt to the past in nearly every play that he wrote. He borrows from Plutarch and Sophocles and Chaucer, and yet he is the supreme original genius of our race. There can be no originality in telling people to be good. Goodness is as old as Enoch. The great principles of the moral law are as old as the Decalogue, and older. If Jesus had spoken nothing but what was absolutely new, then His teaching (at least a large part of it) would necessarily have to be false. Because no really good man has ever lived who did not catch some fleeting glimpse of the laws of goodness. Men are making discoveries in science every day, but there are no discoveries in morals. For 1900 years no fundamental article has been added to the moral code. If all truth is eternal, must not primitive man have known something about it? Paul speaks of "the law written in the heart." John speaks of "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The originality of Jesus is not simply in what He said. The idea of cardinal virtues is an old one. It goes back to Plato and Aristotle and Cicero. The Greeks had four cardinal virtues: Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice. Even the most barbarous races have some knowledge of moral duty. Christ recognized the authority of the knowledge that men already had. He assumed the ten commandments. He did not assert duties that were universally acknowledged. He began with men where He found them. There was no need to tell His hearers that it was wrong to steal. They knew that already. They knew that adultery was wrong. They

knew that murder was wrong. What He tried to impress was that sensual thoughts were adulterous. Absolute originality in the realm of morals is an impossible thing.

II. Take another outstanding principle. Note the emphasis the Master places on Inwardness. Righteousness with Him was a question of Inwardness. "The very secret of the method of Jesus," said Matthew Arnold, "is its inwardness." The character of an act is determined entirely by its interior motive. The difference between a living thing and a non-living thing is that in a living thing there is a life force inside directing its workings. In a machine the force is without but in a flower the force is within. The whole question of morality resolves itself to a right ordering of the inward life. Even good deeds of generosity and benevolence and kindness become worthless when done for ostentation and display and appearance. Right action must proceed from the heart.

There are many ingenious instruments to-day for registering weights and measures. We have cash registers and adding machines. There is the seismograph and the barometer and the automatic pen. We have gas meters and water meters and electric meters that are uncannily accurate. Here is a pair of scales. You can weigh a ton of coal on it but you can't weigh a feather. In England the gold is always weighed. The Bank of England has a register so delicate that if you were to pull a hair out of your head and drop it on the scales it would turn the balance. But all this exactness and nicety is coarse and crude compared

with the balances of Jesus. Jesus said that adultery was a matter of the eye. A look can be adulterous. A feeling of hate can be murderous.

It will be seen at a glance how perfectly revolutionary this was. One of the most drastic statements He ever made was when He said, "Not that which goeth into a man defileth him, but the things which come out of him these are the things which defile him." Surely a most startling deliverance! Bear in mind that the vital things in His day were what one ate and drank. The ritual and the ethical were of equal moment. It was wrong to commit adultery: it was also wrong to violate the Sabbath or to eat with unwashed hands. By insisting on the letter, these religious teachers confused the important with the unimportant. They made the paying of tithes of mint and anise and cummin as essential as the weightier matters—Judgment and Mercy and Faith. But Jesus overturned all this. He said that kindness is more important than sacrifice and to love the Lord is greater than all burnt offerings. Indeed, it was this insistence on the moral as against the ceremonial that roused the enmity of the priests, and led them eventually to plot His death.

III. Take another distinctive teaching of our Lord. Consider His ideas about non-resistance. They can be put perhaps into a single sentence—that it is always wrong to retaliate. And when we say retaliate we mean personally retaliate. When wrong is done to us personally, we are not to answer back with a similar wrong. Private revenge is superseded. "Ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye

and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil." And He is looking at the whole matter, let us keep before us, from the point of view of the individual. The point is not a wrong done to others (for defense of the feeble is one of His laws), but a wrong done to ourselves. If a man suffers an injustice at the hands of his fellow man, he is not to answer it back by trying to get even, but rather contrariwise by some act of kindness. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." If a man forgets his duty to you, you must not on that account forget your duty to him. In a word, we are never to fight the Devil with his own weapons. He who fights the Devil with his own weapons will most certainly get the worst of it. He can wield his weapons with so much more skill that no mortal opponent has the ghost of a chance. No use trying to overcome fraud with fraud or violence with violence.

And anyway this is the lowest ground. If we lower ourselves to the level of those who wrong us, how can we possibly convey to them glimpses of a higher civilization? We cannot. The only weapon to fight the enemy with is a weapon bathed in Heaven. Use no blade that is not baptized. The Master's originality cannot surely be criticized along this line. It may be true that He brought but little into the world that is really new, but one thing sure, His method of dealing with evil is startlingly new. When He came, the only way to treat evil was by reprisal. It was a tooth for a tooth. But for the mailed fist He substituted the

pierced hand. Does anyone question the originality of this conception? It was a fresh and really virgin thought.

IV. Consider still one more point—how Jesus rarely dwells on what we regard as the uglier vices and how the things that invite His scorn are the sins that we are tempted to look upon as minor. He was much more gentle than are we with sins of the flesh but He was much more severe with sins of the spirit. The sins He denounces most are not those of appetite or passion but those which involve insincerity and double dealing. How unsparing He was with pride and bigotry and hypocrisy and anger and envy and evil speaking! Indeed, with Him pride seems to have been the cardinal offense. It is the first of the seven deadly sins. It is the great obstacle to the progress of the soul. He said that publicans and harlots would enter the Kingdom before the scribes and Pharisees. Dante has a list of the seven deadly sins as they are called and pride tops the list. The lowest circle in the Purgatorio is where the proud are. The desire to be seen of men! The ambition to shine—how common it is! But our Lord, although He was equal with God, made Himself of no reputation. He taught that the greatest are the humblest. The greater the scholar, the humbler he is in mind. The greater the saint, the humbler in spirit. And insincerity! How severe He was on the insincere man! Sincerity, as Jesus understood it, meant that all our motives can stand the most searching light.

Or consider the gravity of evil-speaking. We think

this a small matter, but according to Jesus it is a very serious and grave offense. "Whosoever shall say to his brother Raca shall be in danger of the council, but whosoever shall say Thou fool shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire." Or consider the sin of omission. We count it a very little matter. Not so He. When before the throne of the Great Judge shall be gathered all nations, it is rather startling that the Judge says nothing of lying or stealing or hate or murder. Those whom He condemns are those whose lives are barren of good. With Him respectable sin is the great sin—selfishness, jealousy, malice, pride, indifference, hard-heartedness. The virtues He values most are humility, sincerity, fidelity. The man who is going to win the ultimate favor of God is the faithful man. We are fitting ourselves here for larger responsibilities in the future if we are only faithful. The greatness of any work is not the important thing, but the love and fidelity with which it is performed.

V. Or once again and finally, note His teachings concerning property. This is one place where we want to be dead sure we are right. Because it is an extremely serious matter to believe that the Master teaches a theory of life which in everyday routine we are unable, and indeed have no intention of trying, to put into practice. This is the way religion often loses its reality and that is about the worst thing that can happen to it. Christ had much to say on the subject of property. The great mass of people to-day it would seem regard the acquiring of property as the chief good. Jesus looks upon it as one of the difficult things in our

upward climb for higher things. He nowhere denounces the possession of property as intrinsically wrong. His whole attitude is the power of earthly things to hamper and block us in our search for the better life. The great peril of property is its distracting power. It makes difficult a living trust in God. If we would only insist on putting spiritual things first there would be no danger, but herein lies the whole stubborn difficulty. Property has an insidious way of pushing itself into the supreme place. The whole attitude of Jesus is not what we have, but what we are is the great thing. Wealth is a means of living—not an end. "The life is more than meat and the body more than raiment."

It is significant that so much of His teaching is taken up with stewardship. The reason being that it is such a splendid test of character. It affords men an opportunity for converting their possessions into soul collateral. So it is a tool to be used for higher ends. It is not given us for display or for indulgence. When we use it in that way we miss the true meaning and scope of life. Property is a sacred thing. It is a trust. To possess it cannot be wrong. It is a gift for the development of the inner life. It is an opportunity for service. Communism and socialism have no place in His teaching. We are tested by the use we make of our possessions. "Make to yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon." It is called unrighteous by metonymy because it is so often abused. All the same, by making wise use of it we can convert it into something that is satisfying and enduring.

In the parable of the talents the man who doubles his apportionment was praised. "Well done, good servant." The man who wrapt his pound in a napkin was condemned. "Thou wicked and slothful servant." If we are not faithful in our use of material things, who is going to commit to us the true riches? Fidelity in the inferior trust is a test of fidelity in greater matters. Wealth is placed in our hands to be used for God.

"So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude."

III

"If I Still Hold Closely to Him"

"Ye shall be sorrowful but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

John 16:20

Sorrow is the appointed lot of man. "Ye shall be sorrowful," says Jesus. He was Himself a sorrowful man. No one can pass this way and be made immune from sorrow. Sorrow is implicit in the very scheme of things. There are undoubtedly great islands of joy but they are all washed by the greater ocean of sorrow. "For man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upwards."

Sorrow is not physical; it is mental. It is the pain of the mind. When we speak of suffering we usually mean physical suffering, but there is a suffering far deeper and keener and sharper than anything the body knows. It is the suffering of the mind, of the conscience, of the heart And this alone is real sorrow. Think of the pain that comes from a sense of having failed, of being a disappointment to one's friends. Think of the grief that comes to parents when their children are wayward. Think of the anguish of a mother whose child is born defective, the suffering of

love. How her tender heart is wrung! Consider the suffering that arises from a consciousness of having been treated unjustly, of having been wronged. Why should Desdemona of all women be chosen to suffer for Iago's villainy? Or instance the torment that results from the stings of conscience, from having done injustice to others. Some kindly soul believed in you and you betrayed them. That wound refuses to heal. Every little while it opens afresh and the nerve hurts, as if some one were dropping acid into the sore. Consider the unhappiness that springs from marital troubles to-day, and so often borne in silence, the infidelities, the neglects, the cruelties, the temperamental misfits. Of course one might go on for hours to speak of the suffering that follows affliction and bereavement and the loss of dear ones. Oh, if we could but call them back and tell them we are sorry for what we did do or did not do. But of this anon.

Then there are the tragedies that can be traced to passion and ignorance and jealousy and mistake. The great tragedies of literature are nearly all founded on passion and jealousy and mistake. Here's Hamlet and Othello and Macbeth and King Lear. How well Shakespeare understood this! And Sophocles too! It has often been noted how most of the tragedies of Sophocles are founded on some mistake or other. Here is that tale that George Kennan tells in his book on Siberia. It is the story of a young physician who was unjustly accused of some disloyalty during the World War and so was exiled by the Russian government to the northern part of Siberia. His young wife at

the time was expecting a child. When the child was born she left the little thing with her mother and started out to join her husband in the far Northland. She knew the name of the town to which he was banished but nothing more. It was several thousand miles distant. For three long months she traveled in the most primitive fashion, part of the way on reindeer sleds, going for whole days without food and nights without sleep, until the hardship and the hunger and the strain and the storm almost blew her courage out. But still she pressed on. The hope of soon meeting her husband sustained her. Now she did not know there were two towns of the same name in Siberia, in one of which her husband was a prisoner. And the towns are 3,000 miles apart. Who can conceive the little wife's crushing blow when she entered the town after a three months' journey such as that, to be told it was the wrong place and that her husband was just as far away as when she started? And is it to be wondered that the shock was so great that she broke under the strain, breathing her last breath away in the frozen North, 3,000 miles from her babe on the one side and her husband on the other. The heart is a vital organ. One may break a bone and no great injury be done. The bone will mend. But when the heart is broken the injury is mortal.

Now the thought arises, what is the Christian way to meet sorrow? What should be the attitude of a man who accepts the authority and teaching of Jesus Christ? And in order to lead up to that thought let us ask ourselves what are some of the other ways. What

do the philosophers propose? What do those teachers advise who do not have the comfort of religion? Let us glance at their counsel briefly.

Well, to begin with, there is the attitude of Forgetfulness. Strive as speedily as possible to forget your trouble, many are telling us. Anything that will drug the memory and dope the feelings is wise and prudent. Here is a mourner in the hour of bereavement. What does she do? Perhaps she rushes into society. Perhaps she decides on travel. Her friends say to her, "Time and new surroundings will help forget. By and by the burden will grow lighter. You will become accustomed to it. The face you miss will after a while grow dim." But is not this a very bitter kind of medicine? How the noble soul rejects it! How the true heart cries: "I do not want such consolation. It hurts more than it heals. I do not want to forget my dear one. I would rather go on remembering forever, even if the memory brings pain." Consolation of this kind always seems such a terrible deliverance. It is the comfort that Job's friends brought to him. It does not answer the cry from the depths. There must be a diviner answer to sorrow than this. There must be some precious lesson in it all. We cannot at least help hoping that our dead are alive with God. And if alive, surely we ought not to try to forget them. Rather should we strive to keep their memory green. We ought to read their old letters and treasure the old tender impressions. How often we witness members of a family drifting apart! Would they be nearly so

apt to do so if they labored more diligently to fan the embers of a dying flame?

Then there is the blessing of Work. To get immersed in some great noble task has often proven itself a marvelous anodyne. To be so busy about one's daily duties that every other solicitude is crowded out. It will be remembered how it was this that saved John Bright in his hour of despair. Even the consciousness that one is able to do something worth while is a great elixir. Trouble is so apt to crush us and make us feel that maybe our work is done, that perhaps we are incompetent and unnecessary and useless any more. Unfortunately a good many cures for the troubles of the world to-day start from the postulate that labor is a curse. There is a perfect deluge of books being published just now on Socialism, and the burden of most of them is that labor is an evil thing. But the root idea is false. Contrariwise, we are gradually learning what a blessing is work. A Labor Union delegate once became angry with Ex-President Eliot and wrote him a letter saying he hoped something terrible would happen to him so that he would have to work hard all the rest of his life. Dr. Eliot wrote back expressing his thanks and saying that nothing more welcome could come his way. There is nothing so intolerable to an earnest, healthy man as idleness. Ours is a world literally soaked in action. It is the safety valve of millions. Labor is humanity's greatest friend. Apart from spiritual considerations, it brings to us our richest blessings.

Consider too the joy of ministering to others. So

often one's trouble fills him with self-pity, and just to be able to get out of this attitude of looking on oneself with compassion and to be able to look at the needs of others is a great and soothing antidote. There is a quaint proverb in Japan that, "When you dig another out of trouble, the hole from which you lift him becomes the place where you bury your own sorrow." This is the theme of Sir Edwin Arnold's poem "The Light of Asia." He tells of a mother who had lost her child and who had gone to a well-known saint, beseeching him to come to her solitude and give her back her darling. And the saint replied, "Go out, my dear woman, into the world and find a home where there is less sorrow than yours, and then come back and repeat your request." So forth she started on her quest, and after long wandering returned, and when the saint welcomed her, she said in effect: "Oh, man of God, I have wandered everywhere, but I have found no such home. I still want my child, but I want more the power to help others."

Still once more there is the attitude of resignation. How common it is to hear people who are down in the depths say, "Well, I suppose I must be resigned. I suppose I shall have to grin and bear it. Looks after all as if that's the only thing left to do." It is certainly not a very victorious way to meet the enemy. To be sure it is better to strive for this than not to strive for anything. But at best is it not a very negative attainment? Is it not apt to be a sign of helpless, unwilling surrender? Miss Elliott describes this mood in her hymn "Thy will be done." The hymn is

beautiful and tender but it is not the idea that Jesus had when He taught us His great prayer. It is a sweet and precious lyric for the hour of bereavement but thank the Good Father life is not all bereavement. Life too is resolution and achievement and accomplishment. Furthermore, the ills that trouble us are not always the will of God. So many of them are the direct antithesis of His will. Jesus taught His disciples to say, "Thy will be *done*" not Thy will be *endured*. We are to do His will not merely to put up with it. There are times when it is disloyal to be resigned. We must never be resigned to evil conditions. Our eternal business here is to correct them.

But all these answers are only partial. Not one is absolutely satisfying. None promise complete fulfillment. The only answer that brings perfect peace to the soul is the promise of Jesus: to transform our sorrow, and to turn the enemy into a friend. To say to oneself, let sorrow come; it will be hard, I know, but it can be transformed. We can gain from it a spiritual victory. It is an opportunity to develop spiritual heroism—that is the real mastery. It is as if one were sailing on a river and, coming to its mouth suddenly, found how it opened out upon the ocean.

How constantly nature witnesses to this wondrous miracle, for is it not indeed a miracle? Here is a coarse, bitter, shriveled, unattractive seed and yonder is a bed of black soil. I bring seed and soil together and soon there springs up a blade, a bud, a flower, a lovely daffodil. It is nature's perpetual triumph—turning the colorless into color, the bitter into the

sweet, the ugly into the beautiful. It is like the flowers in your garden. They are of every tint and every hue but they all come from the green leaf. We very rarely see a green flower and we very rarely see anything else but a green leaf. And yet the flower comes out of the leaf. It is made out of the leaf. The leaf is the fundamental thing.

Perhaps this truth is nowhere more clearly seen than in the world of art. When Wordsworth began to write poetry how the critics laughed! They said that poetry could not be made out of such common things, but Wordsworth took these very common things and glorified them. Likewise Burns. He selects an old bridge and an old mare, or two dogs, or two jolly beggars, or a mouse, or a daisy, and "shapes them into measures of magic." What an insignificant village is Thrums! Its streets are narrow and dirty. Its dwellings are poor and humble. It is the home of simple Scotch weavers, whose daily task is one of drudgery. But Barrie takes you to a window in that little village and points out what is going on from day to day, and as you look you see greater things than Homer ever saw around the walls of Troy.

Browning has a short poem entitled "Confessions." It is the story of a dying man. The room is full of medicine bottles and the odor of drugs. A clergyman calls to see him and talk with him about this vale of tears and his future hopes. He says, "Reverend sir, I have not found it a vale of tears. It has treated me well. It has been a garden of happiness with a love lane in it. These bottles are a symbol. To you

they may smell of ether, to me they smell of roses. To your eyes things may look blue, but to mine it is the blue of heaven. To mine it serves for 'the old June weather, blue above lane and wall.' "

> "What is he buzzing in my ears
> Now that I come to die?
> Do I view the world as a vale of tears?
> Ah, Reverend sir, not I."

It is a parable of human life. There is nothing that cannot be reclaimed. As beauty can be evolved out of mud, so joy can be built out of medicine bottles. Is there anything more interesting than to watch the transmutation of something barren into something beautiful—it may be a swamp or a marsh or a waste product or a human soul? In the South of France there is a tract of land that was at one time a desert. North of the desert and divided from it by a range of limestone hills rolled the river Durance charged with fertilizing mud. A channel was cut through the hills and the waters turned in, and now the wilderness blossoms as the rose. In "Martin Chuzzlewit," a section of our own country which Dickens satirizes as a worthless morass is now a prosperous fertile state. Once a land of desolation, it is to-day part of the granary of the world. Here's Miami, Florida's magic city. Thirty years ago it was little better than a quagmire of stagnant water. It was a mangrove jungle, the home of the rattlesnake and the alligator. It had less than 100 inhabitants. But the mangrove

was cleared, the swamp was drained, the lowland was filled in. And to-day it is a city of boulevards and parks and beautiful homes. "Blessed indeed are they who make beauty to spring up in the waste places."

Everything can be redeemed. Even sorrow can. The transfiguration of the ordinary is the extraordinary. "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Not your sorrow shall be followed by joy! "Turned into it." The joy is going to be the sorrow metamorphosed. "The sword is going to be beaten into a plowshare." And it is not a future alchemy either. Some look upon religion as a life insurance policy payable at death. But not so. Religion operates on the endowment plan. One of the greatest mistakes is to suppose that Christianity has no victory in this life. That it is a mere shelter in the time of storm. Contrariwise, it is a good staunch boat in which to weather the storm and bring us safely into the harbor with banners flying. Accept your sorrow as the will of God and it will become a joy now. The oyster turns the piece of shale into a pearl. "He turneth the shadow of death into the morning." It is a great spiritual truth that sorrow rebelled against embitters, but sorrow accepted can become the most enriching experience in human life. It transfigures everything with a golden splendor.

There is a tavern in the North of Scotland with a painting on the wall by Landseer and the story of that painting has often been told. How one evening a company of men were in the smoking room, Sir Edwin Landseer being one of the company. In opening a bottle of soda water the cork flew out and the con-

tents splashed the newly painted wall, causing a permanent stain. But next day the great painter took a piece of charcoal and converted the stain into the picture of a waterfall, with stags drinking, and copse and heather all about. The blot was transformed into a thing of beauty, and to-day tourists from all over the world visit this old inn to see what is really a work of art. It is the same idea that George Eliot works into "Middlemarch," when she describes a blot of ink dropping on a handkerchief and apparently ruining it. But some one took the lace and began to embroider round the blot till soon she incorporated it into a beautiful design.

Have you not sometimes watched a little sloop put out to sea? Wind and tide are full against her, but she tacks from side to side and with every tack gains headway. Onward she goes, slowly but surely, always forging forward. She reminds one of some birds—the pheasant, for instance—that always mount as they fight.

This then is the secret of the Master's promise, "Ye shall be sorrowful but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." God often leads His children into dark places in order to see the stars. We learn after a while that it is really possible to see in the dark. When you are taken into a dark room, at first everything is black. But after a little the eye adapts itself to new conditions. Human nature sees no light in the grave, but to Peter and John it was flooded with light. If you have read the story of James Hannington's march to Uganda, you will recall that as soon as he drew near to the

seat of government, he was seized. "I felt," he says, "that I was being dragged away to be murdered but I sang 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus.'" The last entry in his diary reads as follows: "It is my eighth day in prison. I can hear no news but I am being held up by the 30th Psalm, which comes with great power." Now the 30th Psalm is a singing psalm. Its closing sentence reads: "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness." The next day two men sent by the king came to kill him. He stood up before them and told them he was glad to give his life. He was only 38. To-day a great cathedral marks the spot where he fell. And the best part of it all is that some years later the son went out to take his father's place. And even that is not the best part of the sequel either. For that son welcomed into the church the very man that put to death his father.

Edward Rowland Sill tells of a coward who flung away his sword in the thick of battle, declaring it to be no good. But the king's son saw the cast-away weapon, sprang forward and seized it and then went forth with it to win a great and glorious victory:

"This I beheld—or dreamed it in a dream:
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge,

And thought: 'Had I a sword of keener steel,—
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—but this
Blunt thing!'—he snapt and flung it from his hand,
And lowering crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and, with battle shout
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down
And saved a great cause that heroic day."

And perhaps Maltbie Babcock's lines are even better:

"Rest in the Lord my soul;
Commit to Him thy way.
What to thy sight seems dark as night,
To Him is bright as day.

"Rest in the Lord my soul;
He planned for thee thy life,
Brings fruit from rain, brings good from pain,
And peace and joy from strife."

IV

"And Nightly Pitch My Moving Tent"

"Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom."

Genesis 13:12

"Daniel opened his windows toward Jerusalem."

Daniel 6:10

THESE verses are taken from two familiar stories. One man is returning from Egypt where he had grown rich in cattle and silver and gold. He is looking round for a place to settle and make a home for his family and the site he selects is in the neighborhood of Sodom. Sodom, it will be remembered, was one of the cities in the fertile valley of Siddim. It stands in the Bible as the symbol of wickedness and shame.

But Lot shut his eyes to that. He was an opportunist. He conferred with Mr. Worldly Wiseman. He felt that it would be to his advantage not to be far away from such a prosperous growing town. And so he conveniently overlooked the risks for a little gold. He sacrificed the highest part of his nature for the lowest, and any man who does that is a loser every time, even if he makes gilt-edged returns on his invest-

ment. It was certainly a beautiful picture that Lot looked upon that day—a very garden of the Lord, but there is a dark background to the picture. For a few years later we read how Abraham arose early one morning and cast his eye over the rich valley where his nephew dwelt and lo! the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace.

The other man is in Babylon, Babylon the great, Babylon the magnificent, one of the oldest cities in Mesopotamia, the seat of debauchery and vice, the Sodom of the Chaldean Empire. He is a prisoner there too and in peril of his life. The royal decree had gone forth to worship the golden image. The King had set it out on the campus in commemoration of one of his victories—a huge thing 90 feet high, 18 wide—and commanded all the people to bow down and worship it, adding that if any rebel refused he would be cast into a furnace. According to another edict men were forbidden to pray for thirty days. They must ask no petition of any god or man save Darius. But notwithstanding this peril and this royal ultimatum, Daniel went into his house and kneeled in prayer and kept his windows open toward Jerusalem. The man was homesick for the Holy City and the Hills of God. A prominent divine tells us that when he was a student at Oxford many years ago one of the Professors there was dying of cancer. The dying man was a native of Iceland and his constant cry was that he might get back to see the snow again in his native land. The hills of his Iceland home were calling him.

One of the familiar sights in Moslem lands is the Mohammedan on his knees. Five times daily he prostrates himself with his face toward Mecca, the birthplace of the prophet. These several times are announced by the muezzins from the minarets of the mosques. If he is journeying across the desert seated on his camel, when the sun sinks below the level waste, he dismounts and spreads his little carpet on the sand and kneels in the direction of the great Mosque. No matter where he may chance to be, this act of reverence is never forgotten. In every part of the Arab world, at the same hour, 230 million Mohammedans are bowing their heads toward the same sacred shrine. It is a most impressive sight.

So here we have two stories of pitching a tent and opening a window. There may not seem to be much connection between them. Let us see. A Tent! What is a tent? Originally, the Hebrews like the Arabs were a people living in tents. They were nomads. Their wealth was in cattle and flocks. A herdsman is of necessity a tent dweller and not till he becomes an agriculturist does he build a shelter of a more substantial character. The tent is a symbol of impermanence. Man is a pilgrim. We have embodied the thought in one of our hymns:

"Here in the body pent
Absent from Him I roam,
And nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

And then a window! What is a window? Windows are the eyes of the house. Without windows what are we but cave men? "But for windows," says Hilaire Belloc, "we should have to go outside to see daylight." Life is full of windows. Some of the greatest blessings of life come to us through our windows. These windows may be plain and unpretentious, but Oh! the outlook they give! Bob Burdette the humorist used to delight to take his visitors to the large window in his library and say, "Come and see my million dollar painting." Approaching, the visitor would look out upon the orange groves of Pasadena, with the San Gabriel Mountains behind towering 5,000 feet into the clouds—a truly wonderful picture.

What a window is our Bible! It is a telescope, but many do not use it as a telescope is intended to be used. They analyze it, scrutinize it, note the different parts of which it is composed; they swing it around, adjust it. They keep polishing the mirror, but they never look through it. They forget that the important thing about a telescope is not the instrument itself but what the instrument reveals. A man may be so busy chopping down trees and counting the chips that he misses the glory of the forest all about him. To the spiritual man the Bible is the most interesting window in the world: to the unspiritual man it is one of the dullest and tamest.

Or think of the wonderful window we call Nature, another Bible and older than the book we prize and love. Unfortunately some look at this Bible and see nothing but the sash and the panes and the putty.

Others look through it and behold the very glory of the Lord. Shakespeare in "As you like it" says, "There are tongues in trees, sermons in stones." But alas! lots of people only see the trees and the stones. Carlyle thought that the only value the Sun possessed for some folks was that it was a saving on their gas bill.

"Two men looked out of the prison bars,
The one saw mud, the other saw stars."

The man who is blind to the wonder and glory of spring, who can look at the mountains and see nothing but rocks to be dynamited and ore to be mined, who can stand before the great oaks of Dodona and say, "What fine boards and shingles there are here," who can gaze at the waterfall and see only power to turn the wheels of industry, is not a spiritually minded man—he has blurred and stained the mirror of the soul in which God meant the divinity of Nature to be revealed:

"A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him
And it was nothing more."

Or think of Prayer! What a window is Prayer! What a vision it can unveil! Or sorrow! What a blessed window is sorrow! How oftentimes it opens up a vista of ineffable delight. Once when George McDonald was in deep trouble he wrote a letter to his wife, in which he used these words: "My windows are all darkened except the skylight." "I've been to

Communion this morning," one saint said to me. "I did not hear a word of the sermon. My hearing is poor and anyway I tried not to listen. It makes me nervous. I just kept looking through that sacred window." To her the Holy Supper was a window.

I passed a lad yesterday on his way to school. He was absorbed in a book and picking his steps as he stumbled half blindly along. I said, "That book must be mighty interesting." He said, "It sure is." I glanced at the title. It was one of Joseph Conrad's stories. He was out upon a ship at sea pitching and rolling with the vessel. He will have a new pair of eyes by the time he gets to school. Keats speaks of "magic casements," but Chesterton adds, "Why all casements are magic casements." Truly indeed some of the greatest blessings of life come to us through our windows. Religion is not primarily believing something but seeing something. It is the opening of the eyes. The spiritual man is the man who sees. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." "Whereas I was blind now I see." The mystics of the world are the men who sit by the inner windows in a brown study and look not out but in upon the experiences of the soul. It was a simple ritual Daniel performed when he threw open that window but it helped turn his soul away from seductive Babylon to the Holy City that he loved and to the God of his fathers. Maybe his eyes looked far afield on a vast sweep of country with the uplands in the distance and he could say with the Psalmist: "I to the hills will lift mine eyes."

But the important thing in these verses is not the tent or the window. There is another word that sees farther and reaches down deeper. "Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom." "Daniel opened his windows toward Jerusalem." Lot cannot be blamed for seeking a place where there was good pasture for his flocks. That was the sensible thing to do, other things being equal. The whole significance of the story lies in the direction which he was surveying. It was not the pasture that was the important thing; it was the neighborhood. He pitched his tent toward Sodom. He was thinking more of his cows than of his children.

So that the great vital question to ask oneself is, Which way is my life leaning? Which way is it fronting, and likely drifting? The important thing is not what we are doing but whither we are tending. The first step toward doing wrong is looking that way. A deed such as pitching a tent or opening a window may be very trifling and yet it may be momentous with meaning. It may be a step toward degradation or a move toward the King's Highway. Men do not take the journey to Sodom at a bound. They approach it by stages. Judge every act by the way it is headed whether it succeeds in reaching its terminal or not. If it is headed toward Sodom, condemn it. If it is pointing toward Jerusalem, commend it, encourage it, in the hope that it may ultimately arrive. The matter of spiritual health and disease is often just a question of facing the right or wrong way. The most important question a man can ask himself is not, what do I believe? but, Which way am I inclining? Because it is

only a question of time, if a man is fronting in the wrong direction, when he will reach the wrong goal. In the very next chapter do we not read, "And they took Lot who dwelt in Sodom and his goods and departed." Lot, it will be noted, is no longer in the neighborhood of Sodom but right inside its walls. "He dwelt there." He was not toward Sodom nor near Sodom but in Sodom. He had drifted in. So the test question is, What am I looking at? What am I hoping for? Which way is my life slanting? Is there any Holy City in my soul to which I turn in prayer? The author of the letter to the Hebrews says, "Let us run, looking unto Jesus." And the sorry part of the whole story is the finale to it all. Lot dwelt in Sodom twenty years and at the end of that time ten righteous souls could not be assembled. What a sad commentary after residing for twenty years in a town that ten righteous people could not be found in it. Even his own family had become Sodomites.

A great preacher has a sermon in one of his books and the title of the sermon is "Righteousness a direction." His idea being that we cannot always map out a clear dividing line between what is right and what is wrong. Who, for instance, can lay his finger on the precise point where taking thought for the morrow becomes a sin? We all know that every wise, sensible parent must take some thought for the morrow, only there is a point where it becomes sinful, where anxiety becomes worry. Or who can locate the very point where self-respect becomes pride? This is the idea at the root of the Latin word trespass, that every sin

consists in crossing some dividing line. But the definition is a partial one. Because sin does not always consist in crossing any line into some actually forbidden field. There is a large territory of truth in which it is impossible to draw any such line. The teaching of Christ goes much deeper. According to Him, sin starts in a longing look toward the forbidden country. It is not a mere matter of rules and chalk lines. Sin is not an act but an attitude. He who wishes to sin has sinned already. "That the caged panther does not pounce on you does not prove him docile. He likely would if he could." So if my heart's desire is to do wrong, then I've done wrong already; if to be good, then I am good. What a man longs to be, that he is in the eyes of Heaven. God takes the will for the deed. When a great purpose came to David, a purpose which he was not permitted to carry out, God said to him, "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart." In one of Kipling's poems the angels wave their flags of welcome to the dreamer whose dreams come true, but in David's case God is applauding the dreamer whose dream does not come true. There is a beatitude for those who are pure in heart, but let us not forget that there is also a beatitude for those who hunger and thirst after purity of heart. For no man, I take it, is righteous in God's sight who has not a pure heart.

And this thought throws a beam of light on that verse in John's Epistle which says that "Whatsoever is born of God sinneth not." In other words, when a sinner experiences the new birth the drift of his life

is toward truth. He may be sinning every day and yet that verse be true. He may be retreating two paces and advancing three. And God judges us not by the where of our life but by its whither—its direction, its dip, its tendency. It matters not on which rung of the ladder our feet are standing. The momentous thing is, are we going up or are we going down? The man who expects to pass his Finals by a sort of death-bed repentance is just befooling himself. We are judged not by the few pious thoughts we are able to cram on the last night of our earthly existence, but by the whole swing and drift of our record. God does not judge a man by what he does the last few days of his life. It is the whole career that God surveys. Many a man has stolen who is not at heart a thief. Many a poor fellow has gotten the worse of drink who is not by any means a drunkard.

The peril of our age is that so many have no outlook, no open window. The shutters are barred, the blinds are down and the people within so occupied and engrossed with the cares of the world that for them there is no sun, no stars, no sky, no distant hills, no horizon, no larger world. This is the peril of multitudes to-day. And the materialist is not the only man who is exposed to the danger. Many who call themselves professing Christians are guilty too. There are thousands in our churches who need to have their windows thrown open so that the fresh air can rush in and sweep away the cobwebs of formalism and traditionalism and ventilate the dusty corners. Oh, for the strong winds of God to blow through our old musty

creeds! So much of our theology is dry and stale. It is the glory of Christ that He is always letting daylight and fresh air into things.

Here then are two stories from the far away. And not so far away either. Indeed, they are being reenacted every day. We are all of us called upon to make just such a choice as Lot had to make. Here is a favored plain that promises a life of ease and pleasure and indulgence. Ease is not always wrong, but often it is a step toward Sodom. The life of pleasure is not necessarily an evil life but it may be a turn toward Gomorrah. Prosperity is not necessarily a wicked thing but it may be a mighty dangerous thing. It may be won at too costly a price. Not one of us but needs to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." It is so easy to follow the path of least resistance. And that is exactly what Lot did. It is the way the world does. It's human nature. Indeed the law is written everywhere. Pour out a glass of water on the ground; it will follow the path of least resistance. Lot followed the line of least resistance.

Daniel, on the other hand, was a man of conviction. He was true to his name. He dared to be a Daniel. The temptations to emolument were as impotent to move him as were the lions in the cage. He wore the "white flower of a blameless life." He was a man of prayer. When he opened that window his heart was far away in the homeland. He was thinking of the temple. He could see by faith the city that he loved. He lived as seeing Him who is invisible.

Human life has often been compared to a river.

Here is our own beautiful Hudson. Many consider it the most picturesque river in the world. It rises in the Adirondacks 4,000 feet above sea level. It flows transversely through the Appalachian ridges, the oldest rock in America. Sometimes its course is east, sometimes west, sometimes even north. It winds for 16 miles through the Highlands between banks that rise 1500 feet sheer on either side. At one point it almost loses itself in the Tappan Sea four miles wide, then suddenly it becomes a narrow gorge that you could almost drive a golf ball across. The dip of the river in spots is very steep, in some places more than 60 feet per mile. Near its mouth for 18 miles it has hewn out for itself a great dike of trap rock called the Palisades.

Then what a historic stream it is! Every nook and corner is connected with the history of our Independence. At West Point there is our great Military Academy. At Newburgh was Washington's headquarters. At Tarrytown André was captured. Here are the scenes that Fenimore Cooper loved. Here are the mountains where Rip Van Winkle slept. It was an important waterway in the Revolutionary War. It was on this river that steam navigation was first introduced by Robert Fulton. You may talk of the rocks and mountains in its path, of the obstacles that try to block its progress, the windings and circumwindings—none of these things are insurmountable. All the way along, from its source 300 miles up yonder, it is destined for the ocean and the ocean it is bound to reach. Nothing can stay its course.

Such is human life. From God it comes. To God it must return. The obstacles are nothing. No difficulty matters. Success is nothing. Fame is nothing. Glory is nothing. Christ's valuation of life's goods is so different from ours. Money, comfort, position, fame—all are low down on His scale. A lad who became the Governor of the State of Massachusetts, once came very near to death by drowning. He had to swim nearly a mile from a boat that had overturned. Afterward when he was relating his experiences to his mother, he said: "I just thought of you, Mother, and kept on swimming." There is a lesson in that for us. Let us fix our eye on the goal and keep on swimming. "Let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus."

V

"Bringing in the Sheaves"

"The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few."

Luke 10:2

THIS is one of those texts that calls for imagination, Imagination is the power of mental vision. Spiritual imagination is the power of spiritual vision. Our Lord had a rich imagination. He has just been speaking the parable of the sower. The harvest was four months away. The fields of Samaria had only been plowed. The farms were just coming out of the dead sleep of winter. "Say not ye there are four months and then cometh harvest: look on the fields, they are white." He saw the harvest already in the red soil. And now He is sending out the seventy, and He tells them as they go out two by two: "The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few." And when these same seventy returned He exclaimed: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." His imagination was so strong and penetrating that in the first feeble victories of these Apostles He saw the earnest of the restitution of all things. They were the advance guard of the hosts that were coming.

Jesus is ever appealing to the imagination. It is a great spiritual gift, as Wordsworth said. It is the inner eye which sees farther and deeper than scholarship or experience or even intuition. Paul speaks of the golden age, when "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." What is this but a great dream of inspired imagination? Think of the vision that came to Isaiah "when nations should beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more." Men to-day are telling us that that sort of stuff is rubbish, that war is inevitable. But not so this old prophet! His imagination was kindled into "magnificent hopefulness" by the touch of God. It is the vision the writer to the Hebrews had when he said: "We see not yet all things put under Him, but with the eye of faith we do see even now Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor."

Imagination and faith are close akin. Some one calls faith the child of the imagination. Faith is realizing the attainable, it is substantiating the possible, giving substance to it, giving body to things hoped for. Do you recall that story from the life of Robert Moffat? He and his wife went out to Africa in 1817. They labored there for twelve long years before a single convert was in sight. Then six loomed up at once. Now it happened that three years before this first fruit of the harvest, Mrs. Moffat had received a letter from some of her friends at home who wished to present her with a gift and asked what she would

like to have. She replied, "Send us a communion set." The gift was long in coming. And strange to say it came just as these six men were about to be received into the church. Singular coincidence! Many no doubt would so regard it, but those who believe in the power of faith and prayer would not call it such. They would prefer to say that this good woman had something of the vision the Master had. It was the fulfillment of a long and forward-looking expectancy. One is reminded of Mary Slessor. She had this same "magnificent hopefulness" when she went out to Africa from her humble Scotch weaving shed. When the Indian Chief scoffed at the idea of being helped by a woman, she replied, "But you have forgotten the woman's God."

Now the word harvest with us has several meanings. When we use it we usually mean crop, yield, the fruit of the farm. Then we stretch it to include the outcome of any exertion. We say of a business, it yields a fine harvest. If a man is successful in his investments, if he strikes oil, if he drives "a roaring trade," we say of him, what a harvest that man is reaping! We speak of the harvest of sin. We speak of the harvest of death. Death is the great grim reaper. How noiselessly he moves! How his feet are lined with velvet! How silently he swings his scythe, and one by one mows us all down!

But the harvest the Master is talking about is not corn or wheat or barley or human life; it is an immortal crop, a harvest of souls. Human souls are His sheaves. Every soul brought up out of the miry clay

and set on the King's Highway is a part of Christ's gleaning. Men and women are His field of enterprise. "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, thrust in thy sickle and reap: and He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle and the earth was reaped." That was the Master's harvest.

And the beautiful thing about it is, this harvest is ripe we are told. That does not mean that every human soul is ready for the granary. It means rather that there is one here, another over there, one in that boys' club, one in that Sunday school class. Christian reaping is a matter of individual work, picking the fruit. The harvest is ready, waiting for the sickle, and if it is not cut and gathered and stooked, it will fall and be a dead loss to the Kingdom.

And is there any loss greater? Note carefully the words the Master uses. He does not say with Newton, "pebbles by the sea," or even with Carey, "jewels in the mine." "I will go down into the mine if you will hold the rope." He says corn fields, wheat fields, precious wheat, the most precious thing that grows. It is a sad thing to see corn fields going to waste; sad to look upon the golden ears of barley bending under the summer breeze and shelling. It is possible to have an excellent harvest but to leave it ungarnered. If a jewel is lost it may be found, but if a field of grain rots it can never be restored. We are not only to

preach the good news; we are not only to give the evangel to the world. We are to disciple all nations. We are to preach the gospel to every creature, but that means more than simply proclaiming the message. It means that we are to proclaim it in such a winsome way that it will be accepted, at least in such a way that we will not be responsible if it is rejected. It means that we are to study the mind of the listener so as to inspire his confidence and win his love. It means in a word that we are to be reapers.

Here then is a message from autumn. We are letting autumn speak to us to-day. But we cannot understand the message of autumn unless we first get the message of spring. Spurgeon used to say that just as there are four evangelists in the New Testament, so there are four evangelists in Nature—spring, summer, autumn, winter. There is a little book called "The Fallow." It is an anonymous work. And there is a story in it of a man who lay dying in a New York hospital one warm May day, a lad born out on the prairies and accustomed to farm life. One morning he came out of his delirium, and looking out of the window he saw the beauty of the lawn and said to the nurse, "What month is this?" She said, "It is May." And falling back he whispered to himself: "I must not die, it's sowing time."

Well, this is sowing time in the Kingdom, but the fundamental fact that underlies all spiritual agriculture is that it is reaping time too. The Lord of the harvest is the great Sower. The seed He sows is truth. The seed is the Word. The word of God has

never been absent from the life of man. The spirit of the living God has been scattering grain for years in the red furrows of human hearts. Some of the ground is good ground, some of it is mighty poor, some of it is stony, some thorny. Some of it brings forth thirtyfold, some sixty, some an hundred. Some we never hear from at all. It falls on the highway and is lost. It is the same seed, but what an infinite variety of soils! And only that soil is good that is responsive. Over the great wide fields of human life the Divine Sower scatters His seed, and the soil that responds is the soil of the Kingdom.

There is a familiar verse in the good Book which says: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap." This is always true in spiritual things but not always is it found true in nature. Because there is not a little sowing in the physical fields of the world which is never followed by any reaping at all. The seed may rot or be blighted or it may fall on rock by the wayside. Jesus says, "A sower went forth to sow," but He does not tell us whether the man ever reaped or not. A man may toil for years to build up a business. He may be wise and honest and faithful. But when he is in sight of his hopes a great commercial blow-out may sweep away his plans, and cause everything to slip from his grasp; or some physical malady may lay him aside. The lower levels of life are exposed to storms and floods. What we sow there, we are never sure of reaping. It is only the eternal fields that guarantee a harvest.

Now in the passage before us there are two facts

mentioned. First, the harvest is plenteous; it is abundant. We would say to-day a splendid harvest, a golden harvest. Sometimes the criticism is heard, I do not believe in revivals; I think there ought to be a revival in the church all the time. If by that is meant that we ought to be gleaning a harvest all the time, well and good, but if it is meant that there are not special periods of refreshing it is not true either to nature or to history. It is not the law of the spiritual world any more than of the natural. Rich harvests are intermittent things. They go in waves. Sometimes there are long spaces of weary waiting. As in nature, so in spirit there are seasons of blessing.

And just such a time there was when the Master spoke these words. The harvest was plenteous. The Jews thought the Samaritans were unripe and yet Christ showed how ready they were for the sickle. It was to a woman of Samaria that He preached one of His profoundest sermons. It was to a heathen woman of Canaan that He said, "O woman, great is thy faith." It was to a pagan Roman soldier that He confessed, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel"; adding furthermore those memorable words, "And I say unto you that many shall come from the east and from the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven." Dear, surpassingly dear to Him were His own people, the chosen of God. None ever loved them as did He, but all the same some of His tenderest words were spoken to aliens and strangers. How touched He was with the faith of the

Syrophenician woman! How the coming of the Greeks drew from Him a burst of holy joy!

And one cannot help feeling that there is just such another time to-day. The world seems to be ripe for great spiritual returns. The fields are white. There is a possible harvest in every land, and could we but look at men and women through the Master's eyes we should see that many of them were ready for the sickle and just waiting to be gathered. There are godless homes here on Fifth Avenue and under the very eaves of our churches. But there are, on the other hand, stirrings of conscience and gropings after the divine under the paint and thick skin of the barbarian. In the 8th chapter of Acts we read that when the Holy Ghost led Philip to a humble inquirer saying, "Go join thyself to this chariot," the poor black man was not far from the Kingdom.

Look out at the great heathen world. Many there are who believe that we are on the verge of a spiritual awakening there that is going to astonish mankind. They feel that the present hour is the most momentous in the world's history. Those who know tell us that there is a breaking up of traditions in India. There are marvelous changes going on in China and Japan. The book of the Acts is the only unfinished book in the Bible; it is gradually being added to every year and brought up to date. And the chapters are being written by our modern apostles. The world is waiting for the church to go in and garner the ripening wheat.

Instance one page from the story of modern missions. Every child has heard of Uganda. There is a

province in Uganda known as Busoga and the king of this province was until a few years ago a cannibal. He armed his troops and waged war with every tribe about him—chiefly for plunder. He was the terror of the country. He had a vast harem of women, and when they did not please him he did not hesitate to cut off their fingers or their ears by way of torture. He was a typical African savage. Now it chanced that in the year 1906, a missionary was showing some stereopticon pictures of the life of Christ. King Tabingwa happened to be present, and the pictures made such an impression on him that he stood up and said he wanted to become Christ's follower. He was baptized next day in the presence of about a thousand of his subjects. It would seem indeed that if the true light is lighted anywhere, some eyes will open and respond.

And the other thought, the laborers are few. How few they are indeed! We have one ordained Protestant minister at home for every five hundred of our population. We have one in non-Christian lands for about every 50,000. We have one doctor in this country for every thousand people; over there, roughly speaking, one to about every million. That does not look like the work of flaming crusaders in an undying cause, does it? Even here in the homeland, the laborers are but a handful. Those who have had any experience in trying to secure teachers for the Sunday school or the mission have had it brought home to them in a lamentable way how rare volunteers really are. What is lacking more than anything else in the fields and vineyards to-day is reapers. It is a fine thing to write a check

and send it in and say, Get some visitor to go out and take my place. That is splendid. We are not belittling it. Only it cannot take our place. No one can hire another to do his work.

There is a wide difference between preaching and delivering a sermon. Most people have such a conventional idea of what preaching is. We can preach by smiling, by singing, by saying good morning, by visiting the sick, by speaking a kind word to somebody that is tired, by writing a letter. Harlan Page conducted a great business but he never was too busy to drop everything and sit down and write a letter for his Master. You can take a day off from your bank or your store or your office, and put a little tract in your pocket and go out and preach. George Müller of Bristol was one of the church's immortals. In the story of his life, he calls it "The Narrative of My Life," he gives his experience in this matter of tracts. And what a fruitful experience it was! The Socialist is using it; the anarchist is using it; the atheist is using it. If you walk down 42nd Street almost any afternoon you will see a man peddling a paper, "The Atheist's Weekly." You will see another with one entitled "Birth Control." "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

We must go where the people are. That is what every business enterprise is doing. They go to the people. The more populous the community the greater the harvest. I am told that the United Cigar Corporation knows fairly accurately the numbers that pass any one of their stores every day. One of my own

friends, a boot and shoe man in Los Angeles, was considering starting a new store in that city. He had three or four sites under consideration, and he posted a man for a whole day at each corner to count the numbers that passed by from 10 in the morning until 5 or 6 in the evening. Before selecting his site he wanted a rough estimate of these figures. That is what business enterprise does. Why should not the church do it? Do you recall that remarkable story of Gaspard de Coligni who was wounded at the battle of St. Quentin? While convalescing in the hospital he read a little pamphlet and was converted by it. He became a great French admiral and his statue can be seen to-day in one of the parks of Paris, standing with a Bible in his hand. He gave the pamphlet to his nurse and she gave it to the Lady Superior, who was also converted by reading it. She fled to Holland, where she became the wife of William of Orange, the organizer of our Dutch Reformed Church. It is his coat of arms which you see on our calendar. What the world needs to-day more than anything else is the revival of personal effort—the touch of your hand, the tone of your voice, the sympathy of your warm, loving heart.

And then lastly there is the call to Prayer. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send laborers into his harvest." The campaign for money is important but the really urgent campaign is for men. What avail all our money if the men be lacking? In the World War the United States took the short cut of conscription. She drafted her soldiers but our Leader does not draft. Ours to pray, His the leading.

What the church needs to-day is to marshal the intercession of her membership. Without the leverage of prayer this load can never be lifted. The only policy that Jesus proposed was the policy of prayer. He said nothing of conferences or drives or committees. The key to the power house is in our own hands. Not "We can do it if we will" or "We can do it and we will," but "He can do it if we will." The Master did not say, the harvest is ripe, let us ask God to reap it. That He could easily do to be sure. He could reap His harvest without your aid or mine. But such is not His plan. We are His instruments. We are to pray, and then we are to say, maybe we can answer our own prayers. Oh, what a problem confronts us! The heart of two great continents, Asia and Africa, is almost untouched. In China alone the task is gigantic. Tibet and Afghanistan are destitute. In India there is province after province unmanned. Africa is still largely a vast sweep of unrelieved darkness. Abyssinia has but one Protestant station. Whole tribes are Mohammedan or pagan. But our hearts must not falter at figures. The Moslem menace is great but prayer is greater. Do you ask who or what is sufficient for these things? Our very dismay urges us to reply, Nothing is sufficient but prayer.

Let us remember then that it is the Lord of the harvest himself that calls His laborers. The work is apostolic. "These twelve Jesus sent forth." And these seventy likewise. And the word used is a strong one, "Sent forth," literally drove forth. It implies urgency. "The spirit driveth Him into the wilderness."

Who was it summoned Carey from his cobbler's bench and drove him out to India where he toiled for three and forty years? Did the church? Judge by Ryland's rebuke that such a rash and foolish venture would be flying in the face of Providence. Who was it drove Robert Morrison and Burns to China? Was it the church? Who was it drove John Williams the blacksmith out to the South Seas to become the regenerator of Western Polynesia? Who was it drove Judson, and drove him against his will, out to Burmah, where he labored for years without reaping a single sheaf, and when his friends began to think he had missed his calling, he replied, "If you are tired of waiting just leave me, and twenty years hence look this way." And to-day if you look that way you will see a great granary of golden grain ingathered for the glory of God.

Or take the case of Madagascar with the blood of its martyred saints. It is Christ's own commission that we take His evangel to the uttermost parts, and if we cannot go ourselves, let us pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send some one in our place. Who was it drove Judson out to Burmah to toil for six long years before he had won a single star for his crown? Or Henry Martyn to Persia to "burn out for God"? Or Keith Falconer to sow the seed on dry gravel among the Arabs? Or James Gilmour to Mongolia to endure the heartache of waiting for almost a lifetime before he had anything to show, and then walking twenty-three miles over the burning desert to have a personal interview with his first recruit? Till he said himself

he felt "as if he were trying to lift a pane of glass by taking hold of its face." Hear the ringing words of Mary Lyon, "If you want most to serve your race, go where no one else will go, and do what no one else will do. Look for positions that will make the heaviest demands on your self-sacrifice, test the fiber of your sainthood most severely, and remember every inch of your journey that God can accomplish wonders through a man if he will only get low enough to let him use him."

"Come, dear Heart!
The fields are white to harvest: come and see
As in a glass the timeless mystery
Of love, whereby we feed
On God, our bread indeed.
Torn by the sickles, see Him share the smart
Of travailing Creation; maimed, despised,
Yet by His lovers the more dearly prized
Because for us He lays His beauty down—
Last toll paid by Perfection for our loss!
Trace on these fields His everlasting Cross,
And o'er the stricken sheaves the immortal
Victim's Crown."

Evelyn Underhill.

VI

"In Lowly Paths of Service Free"

"But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed. . . ."

Luke 10:33.

EVERYBODY is familiar with the story. Perhaps it was a true story. Who knows? Maybe something of the kind had just taken place and the facts were fresh in people's minds. Possibly some commercial traveler had been attacked by bandits and everybody was talking about it. Not at all improbable. And the Master took the details, worked them into a spiritual setting and in this way gave them an eternal value. We call it the parable of the good Samaritan. Mr. Silvester Horne called it the parable of the Great High Road. But it is more than a parable; it is a great moving drama. And what a medley of characters there are presented. There is a priest, a Levite, a Samaritan, a wounded man and a robber. They had almost nothing in common. Nothing but an accident or an outrage could ever have brought such a cluster together. Indeed we are told that it was by chance they all met—and on a lonely road at that, and dangerous.

Turn your eye on the cast for a moment. There is

first of all the priest. Jericho we know was full of priests. There was a school of the prophets there. The priest was the special servant of the Most High. Doubtless he had just come from the Temple where he had been ministering in sacred things. He was a pillar of the whole religious edifice. One can easily picture the eyes of the bleeding man as they looked up beseechingly into the face of this priest of God, perhaps with a Bible and a prayer book under his arm.

Then there is the Levite. He is one of the underlings of the Temple, a sort of curate, a young man perhaps from the theological seminary. He too was a minister in holy things, another prop of the religious system. But when he saw the wounds and the red blood flowing, he passed by too. Some say he was chicken-hearted, but this is altogether too generous. It looks more like a case of being just plumb plain hard-hearted. It is quite possible to have the Psalms of David and the laws of Leviticus ringing in one's ears, and yet one's heart be hard as hickory. The two worst characters in the drama are the very two that we would have expected to have been the best.

Then we see another human approaching. It is a Samaritan. The hatred between Jew and Samaritan is almost hopeless to make real. To a Jew a Samaritan was on the level with a dog. He would not sit at the same table with him. A Samaritan was an outcast from the commonwealth of Israel. And now a Samaritan has a Jew in his power. One wonders what he will do. Let us follow and see. He comes to the unfortunate fellow and when he looks down, a lump rises in

his throat. "He had compassion on him," we are told. He read in an instant the rough and bleeding facts. All the old hatred was forgotten. Here is a human being in trouble. And so his first impulse is to go to work and help him. He went out of his way. He takes the wine and the oil and the bandages. Then he lifts him on his donkey and walks himself, holding him on no doubt with one hand. And when he arrived at the inn he hands him over to the host, saying: "Take good care of him." He was without doubt a poor man himself for he only gave him two pence. That would pay his expenses for about one day. But take good care of him: I will return and see how he is getting along, and "whatsoever you spend more when I come again I will repay you."

This then is the story. And is it not a beautiful story? It tests our Christianity. What blessed results have flowed from it! Who can number the thousands of hospitals it has erected, the asylums, the multitude of homes for the oppressed and unfortunate. If ever we are tempted to lose heart when we think of the selfishness of society and the hardness and heartlessness of the commercial struggle, our courage returns when we recall the countless institutions of charity and relief that are all around us. It is indeed a beautiful story. And it will be remembered that it was told as an answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" That question had just been asked by a lawyer, i.e., one versed in law, especially religious law. Who is my neighbor? It was one of the knotty living questions of the day. It was warmly debated in the Rab-

binical schools. The lawyers were discussing it, discussing it to be sure in a very small, petty, legal, academic way. "Who is my neighbor?" With whom may I trade? With whom may I associate? Whose garments are unclean that I happen to touch? To whom do I owe the love commanded by the law? What is it makes a man a neighbor of mine? The old Levitical code said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Yes, but who is my neighbor? That is the whole point. These lawyers were so busy with their definitions that they forgot all about their duties. No doubt this particular lawyer expected another definition. Bear in mind the common belief of the day that humane obligations were limited. A Jew owed nothing at all to a Gentile. The Master, however, lifts the whole controversy out of the realm of definition. As some one has said, "He does not give a definition: He describes a situation."

I. Now the first lesson to learn from this matchless narrative is that our neighbor is our fellow-man in need. That is the whole genius of the parable. We are to love our fellow-men simply because they are our fellow-men. It makes no difference where they live, or how they live, or what their business or their creed or their color. Every human being, because he is a human being, has a claim on us if we can help him. And when we say a claim on us, we mean a claim on our affection. We usually think that our neighbor is the man who lives next door. But Jesus says a neighbor is one with whom we have somehow or other been brought into contact. We may live next door to him

or not. It is possible here in New York to live next door to a man and never know him. I lived for ten years in an apartment and I never knew the people above me or below me. I did not know what they looked like. I would not have recognized them had I met them on the street. Jesus says proximity has nothing to do with neighborliness. A man is my neighbor when we have exchanged intercourse, feeling, experience. To have the opportunity of helping—that is to be a neighbor. It matters not whether the man who crosses our pathway is rich or poor; the only thing that matters is, does he need me? Our neighbor is anybody in trouble to whom we have an opportunity of being kind. This is the way to secure a pass through the pearly gates.

It will be readily seen how revolutionary such teaching was in the days of our Lord. The Jews were not permitted to even eat with a man who was a Gentile. Everybody outside the pale of Judaism was unclean. To the Greeks all nations save their own were barbarians. The Romans knew even less about humanity. They believed that their mission was to conquer and enslave all the peoples of the earth. They knew nothing at all about humanity. Mercy was a virtue they did not even consider. One of their greatest poets speaks of the pleasure it gives him to see others in trouble. "How lovely," he says, "to sit on the shore and watch the people struggling for their lives in the waves." "I hate the vulgar crowd," another of their poets sings. Think of a man like Seneca saying, "Pity is morbid and unworthy of wise men." Rome in her palmiest

days, with a population of more than a million souls, had not a single hospital. Corinth had none. No such thing as a hospital anywhere in those days! No institution for crippled children, or crippled anything. According to Plato the cripple must be eliminated. Do we realize that it was a bishop of the Christian church who founded the great hospital in Pontus. Do we appreciate the fact that it was a Christian woman who founded the first hospital in Rome? She was a disciple of St. Jerome. Do we ever stop to consider that it was a Christian empress who was the first hospital nurse?

The criticism is sometimes made that if you want a kindness done to you to-day, you must go to some one who makes no profession of religion. But the slur is unwarranted. There are no kinder-hearted people anywhere than are to be found in the sanctuary. Let us not forget that in the World War something like ninety per cent. of all the money given to the Red Cross was given by the churches. It is the religious people of this country who are supporting the hospitals and the orphanages and the sheltering homes. The new thing that the Gospel brought into the world was kindness and brotherhood. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of the Good Samaritan. Help takes the place of oppression.

The trouble with most of us to-day is we do not realize how far-reaching this truth is. One man says, I'm a busy man and in the run of a day I meet all sorts and conditions of people. There are my family, my friends, my business associates, my customers, my

clients, my patients. Then there are the scores I meet casually on the streets and with whom I have simply a nodding acquaintance. It is quite impossible to feel toward all these people in the same way. I have not the time for one thing. I must pick out those with whom I feel I ought to be friendly and in whose welfare I feel I ought to be concerned. This is the way that many argue and so narrow the scope of their sympathies. And as a consequence it often happens that a good churchman is a poor citizen, or he may be even unreliable in his business dealings. Simply because when asked, who is my neighbor? he answers by limiting his sphere of interest to some little section instead of covering the whole. To love those who love us, well that is an easy matter; it is really one of the luxuries of life. Ah! but to love the unlovely, the disadvantaged, the repellent—that is where the sandal rubs.

Here was a poor Samaritan. He was going about his ordinary duties. He did not come purposely to the scene of robbery to find out if there was anything he could do. He was no crusader going out on some important mission of adventure. The way the story puts it is, "As he journeyed along." He was just a simple peasant journeying along on his own ass and going about his own business. There is a little story by Jacob Riis entitled "Neighbors." It is the tale of a poor tattered violinist sitting on the curbstone on Christmas eve, grinding out his tunes, cracked and old like himself. He has been playing all afternoon and there are only a few pennies in his cup. And then a young woman comes along, richly dressed, and

with every mark of refinement. She takes the violin from his hands and begins to play. Soon the street traffic is halted. The people realize that an artist is at the strings. One after another empties their silver into the pail, and when the vessel is full she says: "A Merry Christmas, Friend," and passes on and is lost in the crowd. It is the parable up to date.

II. And the second lesson is that humanity with love is infinitely better than orthodoxy without it. Now do we believe that? It is true whether we believe it or not. This man knew very little. He was not much better than a pagan. He did not know exactly what he believed. Maybe he believed little more than nothing. Christ Himself said to the woman of Samaria, "Ye know not what ye worship." He was a heretic, an outcast. And yet when it came to grips with the rough bleeding facts of life, he had the heart of the matter in him. So that when placed side by side with respectable church-going orthodoxy he towers clean and clear out of sight.

There are two views of what Christianity really is, some claiming that it is another-world affair. We are to be indifferent to comfort and ease and luxury and even pain. We are only pilgrims under probation. We are here for discipline. Let us make the best of our lot. It will not be long anyway. The main thing is to read our title clear to mansions in the skies. The other view is that our chief business down here is to be kind, to feed hungry mouths, to clothe naked bodies, to visit the sick, to do all the good we can and at all times to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

Ah, we need to learn this lesson to-day. There are scores of people who go regularly to the Temple. They can see symbols and vestments and surplices and cassocks and canonicals. But they do not seem able to see their wounded brothers and sisters lying helpless on the roadside. Some people are so plagued busy with definitions of religion that they have no time left for religion. Some people are so busy humming hymns that they cannot hear the sobs that come from the alley. What is the good of all our hymn-singing if it drowns out the cries of the poor sinking unfortunates? Singing and praying and chanting are all very well, but are we to suppose that God is greatly interested in the noise we make in church? At a meeting of Christian workers in New York some years ago, Captain Mahan, the well known naval expert, pointed out in very forcible language the tendency of the modern church to reverse the order of the commandments of the Gospel. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart," this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "But," said Captain Mahan, "the modern church is tempted to say, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart!' "

That may be true, but how are we to know that we love God? Are we not told that he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? If we claim to love God

whom we have never seen and yet go home and are hardly civil to those whom we see every day—what is our claim worth? There is an interesting tale told of Leigh Hunt. The Hunts were very poor when he was a lad, and Leigh relates how one night he was with his mother somewhere in the vicinity of Blackfriars Bridge when a wretched woman approached and said she was cold. His mother had no money to give, but she told the woman to follow her, and turning into a small dark side street she took off her flannel petticoat and gave it to her. She took cold herself from the act and a long illness followed, from which she died. Well, that is the parable up to date again.

"What care I for caste or creed?
It is the deed, it is the deed.
What for class, or what for clan?
It is the man, it is the man.
Heirs of love, and joy, and woe,
Who is high, and who is low?
Mountain, valley, sky, and sea
Are for all humanity.
What care I for robe or stole?
It is the soul, it is the soul.
What for crown, or what for crest?
It is the heart, within the breast;
It is the faith, it is the hope,
It is the struggle up the slope.
It is the brain and eye to see
One God and one humanity."

VII

"I Know Too Well the Poison and the Sting"

> "You say I am rich, I am well off, I lack nothing—not knowing you are a miserable creature, pitiful and poor and blind and naked."
>
> *Revelation* 3:17.

THESE words were spoken to the lukewarm Laodiceans. They were poor but they did not know how poor they were. Some people are rich and are unconscious of the fact. Others are poor and seem not to be in the least aware of that fact. It is possible to look at life just as a caterer might. During the World War one mother who had a son at the front came to a friend to read a letter for her which she had just received from her boy. The poor soul herself could neither read nor write. The letter spoke of a draft on a certain bank which he was sending. The friend said, "Wasn't there something else in this letter? It speaks of a draft." "Nothing but a bit of paper," she answered, "I threw it away." She knew not the value of that bit of paper. Fortunately it had not been destroyed.

Who is the truly rich man, the man who owns a

yacht and cruises among the Thousand Islands or along the coasts of Southern France, blind to the beauty of sky and shore; or St. Francis, that joyous soul who loved the flowers as a mother loves her children, who called the beasts his brothers, who went into raptures over the birds, who called poverty his bride, and yet who lived the life of a beggar, and who breathed his last breath out on the hill sides while the birds sang over his wasted body? Chesterton closing his biography of this holy saint describes his death as follows:

"The stars which passed above the gaunt and wasted corpse, stark upon the rocky floor, had for once, in all their shining cycles round the world of laboring humanity, looked down upon a happy man."

Yonder is a great patrimony. The owner leads you through his noble castle. You admire the furnishings, the paintings, the sculptures, the rugs, the curios, the coins, the ivories, the potteries. Do you envy him? Maybe the joy they give you is greater than the joy they give him. You may hear a music in his running brooks that he never hears. You may see a glory in the hills of which he never gets a passing glimpse. Yes, he owns the place in fee and title, but what are fee and title compared with taste and imagination and appreciation? Maybe it is you the estate enriches, not he. "We do not always own the things we own; so often they own us." "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind." He has the title to the great estate,

but think of the scores who will have the title to it after he is gone.

What is it constitutes true ownership anyway? Is it the parchment deed or is it the power to appropriate? Paul writing to the Corinthians says, "All things are yours." What astonishing words! Remember he was writing to people who were most of them slaves. What could he have meant? Was he simply rounding a period? He meant that all true possession is an inward thing. It is a matter of thought and feeling and perception.

In one of those charming essays of E. V. Lucas, whom Edmund Gosse has recently rated as our greatest living essayist, he tells a story of being conducted by an owner through the rooms and gardens of a Tudor house which had been just completed. At every step indoors and out was something adequate or charming, whether furniture or porcelain or flower or shrub. Within were long cool passages where through the diamond panes the sunlight splashed on the white walls. Without were lawns and vistas of the loveliest colors. After leading him over the estate the hostess turned and asked, "And now, Mr. Lucas, what do you think of it all?" "I thought many things," Mr. Lucas confesses, but the thought which was uppermost was this, "You are making it very hard to die." It is one of the poisonous stings of things too sweet.

Socrates was the greatest figure in ancient Greece. He went about without shoes, without a coat, without a hat. One morning Xenophon when a mere boy met him in a little narrow alley in Athens. The great man

stopped the lad in the narrow passage and said, "Can you tell me, my lad, where those things can be bought that are really necessary to human life?" And the question sent the boy away wondering why Athens had not some shop full of life's good things instead of stalls filled with furniture and fish and sausages and vegetables. How mean and paltry are the goals for which men strive! They spend hours dressing and pampering the body on which the worms are soon to feed. Recently there was published the biography of a great man. He was brilliant and loved the limelight. It was teas and dinners and pageantries and functions and banquets and first nights. There is hardly a line in the book about eternal things. How poor and petty and theatrical and empty the whole show must seem to him now! A man may be buried from head to foot in Russian sable and yet be cold. That man is cold whose heart is cold. All the pilgrims of the night who climbed the steep ascept of Heaven through peril, toil and pain, were millionaires.

Here is a man walking through the woodlands. He hears not a whisper from the leafy groves. He says, Where are all the songsters that I loved to listen to when I was a boy? And yet the air is all astir with the music of the thrush and the meadow lark, but the man is stone deaf to the ecstasy of their note. Strolling into the Metropolitan museum the other day I was quite as much interested in the visitors as in the works of art. Some were making the place a lazy loitering resort; some were in to get out of the wet; some were rushing by pell-mell just to tell their friends

they had been there. Some were evidently passing through the city and had met by telephone appointment just to have a visit, not having seen each other perhaps for years. The most wonderful creations of human genius were all about, but only a few it seemed were thrilled with the priceless display. The throngs were for the most part curious, listless, heedless.

It is the tragedy of the life that has no horizon, the superficial life. Browning tells of passing a shop window one day when he suddenly paused struck with the brilliant exhibit. What a wonderful man, he thought, must be he who owns these priceless relics! If his store is so attractive, what must his home be like—this merchant prince.

"If wide and showy thus the shop,
What must the habitation prove?
The true house with no name atop—
The mansion, distant one remove,
Once get him off his traffic groove!

"Some superb palace, parked about
And gated grandly, built last year:
The four mile walk to keep off gout
Or big seat sold by bankrupt peer:
But then he takes the rail, that's clear."

So he stepped inside, and what a shock when he found nothing to warrant all this display. Everything the man had was in the window. He slept in a little crib back in the corner:

"At back of all that spread
Of merchandise, woe's me, I find
A hole in the wall where heels by head
The owner couched, his wares behind
In cupboard suited to his mind."

And the poet goes on to show how poor a man is if his life is no bigger than his shop:

"Because a man has shop to mind
In time and place, since flesh must live,
Need spirit lack all life behind,
All stray thoughts, fancies fugitive,
All loves except what trade can give?

"I want to know a butcher paints,
A baker rhymes for his pursuit,
Candlestick maker much acquaints
His soul with song, or haply mute
Blows out his brains upon the flute."

I. Now the great trouble with the world is just here, it does not realize its needs. How all earnest teachers run up against this difficulty in the training of youth. The great point in training the young is to inculcate a desire for the best. The first thing to arouse in a scholar's breast is a sense of lack. The successful teacher is the one who can do that. Education is not a matter of cramming: it is a sense of awakening. When once a young man begins to feel his need of an education the battle is more than half won.

Psychologists tell us it is the very groundwork of the educational life.

If a father can once get his child to appreciate the fact that what he is telling him now, will be useful to him by and by, he has succeeded in one of life's most difficult arts. I was told of one father who offered his boy of seventeen the choice of a college education or a motor car. There is no doubt in anybody's mind what the lad's choice was. But what a cruel wrong to the boy! Surely we owe our children the benefit of our experience and our judgment as well as our love. And if they do not feel the need of the higher things, it is not our function to endeavor to instil it? You wish your boy to be musical. And perhaps, like most parents, you have a peck of trouble in getting him to practise. He detests the drudgery. It is a constant nagging, a constant rebellion. The whole difficulty being that he does not realize what a joy and accomplishment music will be to him in the after years. The very moment that begins to dawn, the slavery becomes almost sweet. When I was a lad if my teachers had told me that music would be one of the greatest joys of my life, I should have paid no more attention to them than if they had tried to convince me that our old cow could sing.

Basil King has a story which he calls "The Street called Straight." There is a conversation in it between two young men. One of them has something in his heart which he thinks he ought to do. He is talking it over with his friend, and he says: "Oh it's so hard to know sometimes just what's right to do." "Why

no, I don't think so," the other replies. "Well, that's what a great many people say anyway." "A great many people say a great many foolish things," and then he adds this bit of wisdom: "It's always hard to know what's right to do when you don't want to do it." And Stevenson in one of his stories, "The Master of Ballantrae" brings out this same idea. There is a dialogue between the hero of the story and his servant. "Do you think I never have any regrets?" asks the Master as he watches old MacKellar packing his trunk. "I do not think," replies the servant, "you could be so bad a man if you did not have all the machinery to make you a good man." "Ah," answers the Master, "I guess it's the malady of not wanting."

So often this is where the shoe pinches. It is the malady of not wanting. And the malady of not wanting is due to an even deeper ailment, the sense of need is lacking. Self-satisfaction is the real bar to progress. It was the people who trusted in themselves that the Master most severely rebuked. They learned nothing because they felt they had nothing to learn. The publicans and outcasts went into the Kingdom first. Katharine Mansfield toiled as few writers have ever done to perfect her style. Shortly before her death, speaking of how far short she fell of her ideals in her stories, she remarked, "There is not one of them that I would dare show to God." Sir Oliver Lodge tells us there are fish that are unconscious of the water. And multitudes there are who are unconscious of the needs that are oftentimes vital to their very existence.

The greatest work one can do, let us insist, is to stir into activity this slumbering emotion. And it is not an easy task. Sometimes the hardest contract before the physician is to create an appetite. The patient has lost all taste for simple healthful things. The man whose thirst has been cooled with wines and champagnes and elixirs considers pure mountain water a very insipid drink. The trouble with multitudes to-day is that they have no edge for spiritual fare. They think more of the latest novel than of the story of the Kingdom of God. They would much prefer to go to Boyle's thirty acre lot than to the finest sanctuary on Manhattan. Have you ever pondered over the indifference of the masses to spiritual things? The latest statistics are telling us that seventy-five per cent of our male population is outside the churches. They seem to feel no need of God at all. They have no consciousness of His presence. It is the old story, "God is in this place and I knew it not."

II. Or consider these words from the standpoint of world evangelization. The great fact to keep in view in all our missionary propaganda is the arousing of the people to a sense of their impoverishment. It is an acknowledged fact that all modern commerce is in a real sense the fruit of Christian missions. The missionary goes into the dark interior and develops among the people this sense of privation. The history of architecture and sanitation and transportation in foreign lands leads us back to the planting of the seeds of the Kingdom in these dark places.

When one takes up such a volume as Ely's "Missions and Science" he realizes that missions not only promote commerce; they create it. Every missionary journey opens up new markets. It was a missionary who first introduced plows into Turkey. It was a missionary, the daughter of Dr. Hunter Corbett, who first brought lace into China. It was a missionary who built the first steamship in the South Sea Islands. I have a friend who exports sewing machines to every corner of the world. These are hard commercial facts. A history of the economic development of the world cannot be written without giving a prominent place to our missionaries. When a heathen becomes a Christian he wants a cake of soap and a toothbrush and a pair of shoes and a clean shirt. The savage races of the world are beginning to clothe themselves in the garments of civilization. Fifty years ago Henry Venn the British merchant, stated that when a missionary had been abroad twenty years he was worth fifty thousand pounds annually to British commerce. In China for centuries the people depended on a small earthen bowl of bean oil in which was inserted a bit of pith wick to lighten their homes. It gave but a feeble flickering flame and millions of eyes were ruined by it in the late hours. To-day American kerosene lamps are found all over China.

In periods of hard times we often hear it said that the cause is over-production. But would it not be nearer the truth to say that the cause is under-demand? It seems quite beside the mark to argue that the reason why people are freezing is because there is too much

coal, the reason why people are hungry is because there is too much wheat, the reason why rents are so high is that there are too many houses. The whole missionary program is an attempt to awaken people to a realization of their needs, especially their spiritual needs. The heathen world has no consciousness of any spiritual emptiness. It is perfectly satisfied with its wooden idols. The millions in India and China and Siam have no desire for Jesus Christ, not the slightest.

But the tragedy of the pagan world is that it has a deep need that it is not conscious of. It is uttering a sob that God can hear, and that every man who loves them can hear too. As Phillips Brooks puts it, "The unconscious needs of the world are all appeals to God. He does not wait to hear the voice of conscious want. Mere vacancy is a begging after fullness. Mere poverty is a prayer for wealth. Mere darkness is a cry for light. Whenever a man is capable of being made better than he is, God hears the soul of that man crying out for the goodness that is his right. Whenever a nation is sunk in slavery God hears the soul of that nation clamoring for liberty."

When David Livingstone went to Africa he found the natives unspeakably degraded. And they were perfectly happy in their degradation. They were happier in many ways than he was, for he was a lonely man. And it was this very sufficiency that stung him to the heart and led him to cry out, "Oh Father, help me to show these poor people the beauty of Christ so that they will desire it." There always have been a few big-hearted souls of this kind in the world. Every

wrong is a personal appeal to them. Every hungry child makes them hungry too. They cannot sleep if a neighbor is cold or naked. No imagination is so sacred as that which puts one in a sufferer's place. The greatest triumph of the mental-picture art comes when the mind can put itself in the position of the widow and orphan, when it can feel the lash on the flank of the helpless dumb brute, when it can groan with those that agonize and weep with those that weep.

H. L. Mencken in one of his essays gives us his conclusions about life. In order to be happy he tells us one needs three things. First to be well fed and unhounded by sordid cares. Secondly to be filled with a comfortable feeling of superiority over the masses of our fellow men. And thirdly to be delicately and unceasingly amused according to one's taste. There are thousands to-day whose philosophy is a good deal of that brand. And it is a philosophy worse than the ethics of the jungle, for in the darkest jungle one is often surprised with a little gleam of unselfishness. Its right name would be hog philosophy. Nothing could be further removed from the Christian appeal.

The Christian appeal is a heart appeal. It is from the heart and it is to the heart. Its law is the law of thoughtfulness and kindness. It aims to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and help the cripple and lead the blind and teach the ignorant and hunt out the lost. And if people do not know they are blind and ignorant and lost, the burden is all the greater, the call is all the louder. To make men see how much they miss —that is the task. To implant in their hearts a desire

for the things that are precious to you—that is the problem. And what a vexing problem it often is! You ask a man why he is not a Christian. He will say to you, "Well I feel no need of being a Christian." His answer is frank and often it is sincere. But you return, "My dear sir, we are not always conscious of our needs. Below that outer self of yours there is a deeper self and that deeper self is hungry. You may not know your need, but that does not prove it is not there." Man is a child of God; he is made like God; he needs God. He needs God as a little baby needs its mother though it be so little that it feels no need of a mother.

III. Or consider once more this question in the light of our civil and political responsibilities. What is the great trouble with our patriotism to-day? It is this, is it not, that so many citizens do not realize the obligations of their citizenship. America's real menace is the menace of the citizen who is indifferent. He says, "Well, I'm only one in a hundred million. One does not count for anything. One vote won't make any difference either way. One party is about as bad as the other anyway. I don't feel that I'm essential. Let my neighbor attend to the school, the municipality, the jury, the primary, the ballot box." Strange how men will fight for the franchise when it is denied them, but the very moment it is theirs they seem to care little about it.

In our country we share the responsibilities of government. It is the electors that make the laws. The very fate of democracy is bound up with this feel-

ing of moral obligation. Self-government perishes when it dies. When one remembers how many battles have been fought, and how much blood has been spilled, and how many centuries it took to gain our liberties, it does seem more than strange, almost puzzling indeed, to find millions here in America who ignore them. We were born in a land that cost the blood of patriots and the courage of pioneers and yet in our last Presidential election only about fifty per cent of the qualified vote of our country was registered. The danger confronting our political life to-day, I insist, is its irresponsibility. There is not so much peril in our violation of law as in our insensibility to our duties. Men are losing their independent personality. Hardly anything shocks us morally any more. *Quæ fuerunt Vitia Mores Sunt.* When Pascal once asked his pupils what made a fluid rise in an empty tube they said it was because Nature abhorred a vacuum. Pascal laughed at the answer, adding that Nature abhorred nothing. Then he went on to explain how it was the pressure of the atmosphere that caused the fluids to rise. And it is the lift of popular feeling that is going to rectify most of our public wrongs. Criticism will not do it. Abuse and fault finding and censure will not do it. Nothing will do it but the pressure of public opinion.

Our liberties have come to us far too easily. We did not have to fight for them and suffer for them and die for them as did our Fathers. It is again one of

> "The poisonous stings
> Of things too sweet."

VIII

"There's a Star to Guide the Humble"

"We have done that which it was our duty to do."

Luke 17:10.

THE idea being, we have done nothing to brag of, we have simply done what we ought to have done. Or as Moffat translates it, "We have only done our duty."

"I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty,
I woke and found that life was Duty."

There was once a famous signal given by Lord Nelson, "England expects every man to do his duty." Nelson's own lieutenant tells the story: "His lordship came to me on deck a little before noon and said, "Mr. Pascoe, I wish to say to the fleet that England *confides* that every man will do his duty, and you must be quick, because I have another signal to give which is for close action." I replied, "If your lordship will permit me to change one word it will be obeyed more quickly. Instead of *confides* I would suggest *expects.* You see the word expects is in their vocabulary but confides

would need to be explained." He replied in haste, "All right, Pascoe, do it at once." And so the signal was sent flying from the flagship, "England expects every man to do his duty." And every man did it. It found an echo in the breast of every sailor. And the battle of Trafalgar was won. It is worth noting too that the last words the great Admiral himself spoke were, "Thank God I have done my duty."

Some years ago there was an accident on one of our Southern railways, a few miles from Nashville. There were many lives lost, but the engineer's life was miraculously saved, and when he crawled out from underneath his engine well-nigh crazed with grief, he had a yellow strip of paper in his hand. It was his telegraph orders. And as he rushed frantically up and down amid the confusion, he kept saying to himself, "It wasn't my fault, here are my orders, I simply obeyed, I simply did my duty." One is reminded of Lord Tennyson's ballad in which he narrates how Sir Richard Grenville found himself in his one little vessel fighting for dear life, surrounded by the whole Spanish fleet of fifty-three ships:

"'Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'
And the gunner said, 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply:
'We have wives, we have wives, and the Lord hath spared our lives.

We will make the Spaniards promise, if we yield to
let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another
blow.'
And the lion lay there dying, and they yielded to the
foe.
And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore
him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard
caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly
foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man
and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With joyful spirit I, Sir Richard Grenville, die!'—
And he fell upon their decks, and he died."

Duty is a good old Anglo-Saxon word. We use it every day. Are we quite sure we understand just what it means? Duty is giving another what is his due. It is paying what we owe. It is discharging a debt. If we owe our fellow man anything that means the thing belongs to him. I ought means I owe; ought is the preterit of owe and if I do not pay what I owe in the realm of morals, I am just as lax as if I were not to pay what I owe in the matter of dollars and cents. Some there are who have extremely low ideas of the ethics of a debt. They look upon debt as a small

matter. Men who would scorn to steal do not hesitate oftentimes to repudiate their debts.

But the fact is, a debtor who does not meet his obligations, if he is able to, is just a simple thief. That is a lesson that many need to learn. God's law says: "Pay what thou owest." Paul says: "Owe no man anything." Avoid running into debt, young man. Debt is a millstone around the neck. Never incur any financial obligation that you do not see your way clear to discharge. Pay as you go. No wiser words were ever written than the words that Horace Greeley wrote:

"Hunger, cold, rags, hard work, contempt, suspicion, unjust reproach, are disagreeable and debt is infinitely worse than them all. And if it had pleased God to spare either or both of my sons to be the support and solace of my declining years, the lesson which I should have earnestly sought to impress upon them is, 'Never run into debt! Avoid pecuniary obligation as you would pestilence or famine. If you have but fifty cents and can get no more for a week, buy a peck of corn, parch it and live on it, rather than owe any man a dollar!"

Debt and duty have the same root. There is a world of meaning in these words when we peep below the surface. They imply right and wrong. The very moment we begin to talk about doing our duty, we are in the court of imperatives. The word recognizes the supremacy of conscience. Some languages have no word for home in their vocabulary but no language

lacks a word for must or ought. Once when Jesus said He was going to Jerusalem where He was to suffer many things, Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord." But Jesus said "I must go." He was angry with Peter. He uses the very words which He had used to the tempter in the wilderness. Peter was an offense in counseling such a course. When a man says he must do a thing, there is not much use arguing with him. You cannot convince him that he is foolish in doing it, and even if you could, he will likely do it anyway.

Now the word duty is a precious stone of many facets. Consider the duty we owe to ourselves. When Fred Denison Maurice gave a series of lectures on conscience at the University of Cambridge, his first lecture was on the little word "I." Because, said he, behind a man's conscience there is his ego, his personality. And no truth is vital to a man until he has made it a part of his ego. We must not run away with the notion that we have no duties to ourselves. That is not true. I owe it to myself to be honest, to be decent, to keep my word, to play the game fair, to be loyal to a contract. I owe these things to myself, because for one thing it is the only way that I can have self-respect and peace of mind. What a torture to live a whole lifetime with oneself and not command one's own respect! We owe it to ourselves to be loyal to the laws of truth and right so far as we understand them. No man can be honest with his God until he is first honest with himself. It is absolutely vital to be loyal to one's own convictions. These can be trampled on

only at the risk of moral wreck. We must let nothing come between us and the truth.

It was only yesterday that a young man walked into my study. He said, "I don't like my job." "Why don't you like it?" "Well, I have to misstate things and prevaricate." "Is that so? I wouldn't play crooked for any man." "Well if I don't, I'll lose my place. They'd say to me, all right, there's the door, there are others." "How old are you?" "I'm twenty-eight." "Well, I'd rather walk outside that door and take with me twenty-eight years of honest pride than deliberately lie for any bunch that would ask me to do their dirty work." This morning he threw up his place and came back saying, "Well, I'm down and out; I took my hat and walked out the door." He lost his job but he saved his Christian chivalry. And don't forget it, young man, he will be a winner in the end.

Then there is our duty to our fellow man. No man can save his life alone. No man can shut himself up in monastic seclusion, and say my fellow men are nothing to me. I have a family and a home: I owe certain duties to it. I have children: I owe everything to them. I have a wife: I owe a world of weal to her. I promised to love her and comfort her, and honor and keep her in sickness and in health till death do us part. Marriage is not a civil contract: it is a divine contract. Marriage is a sacrament. Surely an obligation assumed at a church altar is as binding as one assumed at the bank or the store. Down on the Stock Exchange if you lift your finger or nod your head the gesture is obligatory. But the marriage knot

is not a matter of lifting a finger. It is tied, one would think, with links of steel. There are promises and prayers and pledges and rings and clasping of hands and witnesses and signatures in black and white and then the seal of the church, and yet it is discarded as easily and flippantly sometimes as an old faded frock.

Then I have a church. I promised to support it and persevere in its communion. It was a definite obligation. Am I keeping my covenant bond? How easily and indifferently church members ignore their oaths. Religious vows make a strangely feeble impression to-day upon the average man.

And then I have a country and a government to support. Surely my duty to the State and her institutions is a serious thing. The trouble with our land to-day is that so many hold their political duties so lightly. There is a big account against us here and if we have a spark of honor we will want to repay it. We are what we are because of "boundless benefactions bestowed upon us by invisible donors." How did we get our freedom? to mention but one thing. We got it because there were men who dared to speak out what they felt to be true, even though they saw the axe and the block in front of them while they were saying it. Every morning when we turn on the faucet in the bath room we are drawing water from the Catskills 200 miles away. And just so, we owe a mighty debt to those grand heroes, who long centuries ago struck the rock, as Moses did, and let loose a stream of blessing down the ages for you and me.

And then, and greatest of all, there is our duty to

our God. And what is our duty to Him? We owe Him reverence; we owe Him love; we owe Him the joyful worship of our hearts; we owe Him trust; we owe Him obedience. The only way to know the will of God is to do it. Principal Jacks says, "The wisest man will never understand what duty is until he does it." Do the duty that lies nearest and then the next step will be clear. For duty is made up of little things; it is a mosaic. Your beautiful mosaic consists of tiny bits of colored glass. And just so duty resolves itself into a multitude of seemingly trifling things. Ernst Haeckel's definition of duty is, "Duty is a long series of phyletic modifications of the phenomena of the cortex." Which reminds one of the ambiguous remark attributed to a certain lady of sudden fortune, "Well, you've said a mouthful." How much more satisfying is Wordsworth's line, "Stern daughter of the Voice of God." To the one duty is simply a material arrangement of atoms in the outer layer of the brain; to the other it is the Voice of God in the soul.

"Courage brother! do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble—
Trust in God and do the right.

"Let the road be rough or dreary,
And its end far out of sight;
Foot it bravely, strong or weary—
Trust in God and do the right.

"Perish policy or cunning;
Perish all that fears the light;
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.

"Some will hate thee, some will love thee;
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from men and look above thee—
Trust in God and do the right."

Sometimes men say, "Well I don't just believe as you do: my religion is to try and do my duty: Duty is my God." And one always feels like saying to such people, "That's all very well, but did you ever think of this: Duty is only a word. And like all words, the thing is dead." If you fall down and worship duty you're only worshiping a dead image, an idol. The breath that puts life into the word and makes it throb and blush is the Infinite and Eternal Jehovah. The very beginning of your duty is your duty to Him. Duty bows down to and takes its orders from nothing under God's blue vault, excepting the Eternal Author of the Word Himself. It is because I believe in the voice of God that I believe in the supremacy of duty. Right means a straight line. Wrong means a crooked line. And the question is, Who drew the line? That old grim gruff Scotchman, Carlyle, said when on the brink of the grave: "The older I grow, the more I feel the truth of what my mother taught me, 'What is the chief end of man?' 'The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.' "

Sometimes the question is asked, Ought a man to receive any credit for doing his duty. I owe my grocery man $20 and some day I go down and settle the bill. Am I entitled to a special vote of thanks? Am I to boast of my honesty? Is a man entitled to any glory because he tells the truth? This was the trouble with the scribes and Pharisees. They bragged about doing their duty. The spirit of Jesus is different. "We are unprofitable servants: we have only done that which it was our duty to do." There is an old familiar story told of the Duke of Wellington. It will be remembered that duty was the Iron Duke's favorite word. When he died Tennyson wrote an ode to his memory,

"Not once or twice in our rough island story
The path of Duty was the way to Glory."

Well this story goes that he was out hunting one day when he came to a gate. A farmer's boy was at the gate. The Duke came galloping up and was about to pass through. The lad jumped in front of his horse, saying, "My orders are to let nobody pass." "But, my boy, you don't know me: I am the Duke of Wellington." "No matter who you are, these are my orders." "Bravo," said the great soldier, "you are the right kind of a boy," and he slipped a sovereign into his hand. Was he not entitled to some praise? Wellington evidently thought he was.

We hear much these days of the moral equivalent of war, but there is also the moral equivalent of duty. The church is moving heaven and earth to-day trying

to hit on something that will take the place of old-fashioned duty. She is appealing to sentiment and popularity, to fashion, to expediency, to entertainment, to amusement. But it must be confessed that none of these things work. They all lack the dynamic of the old eternal verities. God says, this is your duty. Do it. Do it win or lose; do it sink or swim; do it live or die. No matter what the consequences, only do it. Discipline is the note that needs to be rung to-day. Rights are sometimes to be surrendered but duties are always to be done. Jesus never insisted on His rights. His whole career was one of self-emptying, self-abasement, self-surrender. "Being in the form of God He counted not His equality with God a thing to be grasped at but emptied Himself and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death." Perhaps there has never been a simpler or more satisfying definition of what it means to do one's duty than in the celebrated saying of Huxley, "To do the thing we ought to do at the time we ought to do it whether we feel like doing it or not."

Our English literature can boast two immortal poems on Duty. One by Wordsworth and one by Mrs. Browning. Wordsworth in his great ode calls duty a stern thing: "Stern daughter of the Voice of God." But then he goes on, Duty has a gentle, lovely side too.

"Stern lawgiver,
Yet dost thou wear the Godhead's most benignant grace,

Nor know we anything so fair, as is the smile upon
thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads.
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh
and strong.

"The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds, both great and small,
Are close knit strands of an unbroken thread,
Where love ennobles all.
The world may sound no trumpets, ring no bells,
The book of life no shining record tells.
Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes
After its own life-working. A child's kiss
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad;
A poor man served by thee shall make thee rich;
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee strong."

(Mrs. Browning)

IX

"Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet"

"Come now and let us reason together,
saith the Lord."

Isaiah 1:18

"We must be on our guard," says Bishop Butler, "lest we be led to vilify reason, which is indeed the only faculty which we have to judge concerning anything, even revelation itself." The faculty of reason, he goes on, "is the candle of the Lord within us." These words of the great bishop are worth laying to heart. God did not give us His Word to make thinking unnecessary but rather to stimulate it. In his Gifford lectures Sir Henry Jones says, "The church must learn to represent its beliefs not as dogmas but as truths, which it challenges a disbelieving world to put to the test and to the hardest test."

Is the Bible hostile to honest reason? Let the book speak for itself. "Give a reason," says St. Peter "for the hope that is in you." "Stand still," says the prophet Samuel, "that I may reason with you before the Lord concerning all his righteous acts." St. Paul never hesitated to wield this weapon of the

human mind. "He reasoned of righteousness." "Come now and let us reason together," saith Jehovah.

What is reason? Reason is the faculty that takes the raw material of knowledge and formulates it into a system. It works by the law of cause and effect. Why does the wind blow? Why does the sun rise and set? Why do the tides rise and fall? Why does the coal burn? Why does the ice melt? What makes the ocean salty? Every time our lips say why, wherefore, because, we are moving in the realm of the reason. Given certain conditions what will be the consequences?—It is reason that figures that out. I was led through a factory last summer where they manufacture alloys. These alloys consist mostly of lead and tin and antimony. The manager said, "Everything is mathematical in here. The proportions are iron-clad. We test everything to the smallest decimal. For instance, in making type metal if the antimony is left out, the type will not print. In making solder, if copper is introduced, the mixture is worthless." Uncle Sam puts one per cent copper in all gold money to make it hard. Gold by itself is soft. The coin must be hardened with alloy. If you want hydrochloric acid, it is necessary to bring together one part of hydrogen and thirty-five and a half of chlorine. Thirty-six will not do. There is no guess work in a chemical formula. It is founded on reason. All science is based on reason.

And man is a reasonable being. "What a piece of work is man," says Shakespeare, "how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel,

in apprehension how like a God!" It is because of reason that man is superior to the lower animals. It is because of reason that he rules over them. They are greater in instinct; their marvelous instinct baffles us. The instinct of the bee and the beaver is well-nigh uncanny, but it is in no way progressive. There is no effort after improvement. There is nothing like moral aspiration in the hive nor any effort to better the community. Beavers are surprisingly co-operative creatures but they have never manifested any co-operation along moral lines. There is no genius whatever for betterment. Bees build their hives to-day the same precisely as in the days of Virgil and Pliny. A cat loves fish but a cat "has never been known to use a fishing line." The lion has never been seen to use any weapon save his paw and his tongue and his teeth.

We say of a man that he is reasonable. We mean he is amenable to reason. If you reason with him you can bring him to a sensible way of looking at things. Sometimes we argue with a man and say, "You are not reasonable, sir." Maybe he is a special pleader, perhaps a lawyer pleading for his client, perhaps a debater laboring to make the best out of a poor case. For alas, even dialecticians are not always reasonable. But the normal man under normal conditions is governed by reason. "How noble in reason!" You know, generally speaking, where to find him. You know how he will act under certain conditions and what he will think and say.

Then we live in a reasonable world—a world in which everything can be brought to the touchstone of

reason. Not only is man reasonable; the world is reasonable. We can always bank on the sun and the stars and the tides. Since the earth began "summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, day and night have not ceased." When once we know what any element will do, we can count on its doing that very thing always. We know what to expect from water and fire and gas and electricity. What happened yesterday will happen to-day and it will happen again to-morrow. "Children are born with ten little fingers, ten little toes, two little eyes and one little nose." The regularity is monotonous. Nature is always law abiding. As Joseph Henry used to say, "If you ask Nature the same old question, she will always give you the same old answer." I have just been reading of Dr. Banting and his discovery of insulin, how he labored for years to find it, how he failed and started all over again, always working on the assumption that the laws of nature are real laws and can be absolutely depended on never to play tricky.

This unchangeableness of the physical order is the solid rock on which science builds her throne. There is never any confusion here. It is one of the everlasting facts. Nature never goes back on us, never plays any jokes. There are no surprises in nature. Nature is like a machine. Given so and so you can expect so and so. Given so much gas you can expect so much mileage. The piston will rise and fall just so often. We know precisely what it will do. There are no surprises about an automobile if the thing is working

right. If it is not working right it is chock full of surprises.

And our faith is a reasonable thing. That is our *terminus ad quem.* One year ago in our Men's Association we had a symposium on "How religion can be made acceptable to the modern mind." We are always talking about the modern mind. People speak of the modern mind as if it were a recent invention like the radio or the victrola, or the self-starter or the carburetor. What is the modern mind? Let us be scientific. Is it any different from the mind of Isaiah or the mind of Plato or the mind of Paul?"

Most students of the Bible to-day are satisfied that religion does not have to be made reasonable to the modern mind. They feel that it is reasonable already. There is nothing more reasonable than Christianity when it is correctely presented. Brierley used to say that half the difficulties which the average man finds in the Christian religion arise from faults of statement. When Christianity is rightly stated it wins men. The danger is lest we be jogging along with old worn-out machinery and shut our eyes to new truth. The Bishop of London, going on the platform to address a group of men at Victoria Park, overheard one man say: "How much better if the reverend gentleman would only tell us something to help our reasons instead of asking us to swallow a lot of stuff that he doesn't believe himself."

(a) Consider then some reasonable facts about our faith, facts that would be accepted in any American court of justice. Take its conception of God. That is

the fundamental postulate of every religion. What has it to say of the cause of all things? Is a belief in a Supreme Being or a fortuitous concourse of atoms the more sane explanation of the cosmos? This is a question for reason to decide. There is a poem in literature, and something like this is how it runs:

"The world rolls round forever like a mill,
It grinds out life and death, and good and ill,
It has no purpose, heart, or mind or will.

"While air of space and Time's full river flow,
The mill must blindly whirl unresting so,
It may be wearing out, but who can know?

"Man might know one thing were his sight less dim,
That it whirls, not to suit his petty whim,
That it is quite indifferent to him.

"Nay, doth it use him harshly, as he saith?
It grinds him some slow years of bitter breath,
Then grinds him back into eternal death."

Now is that reasonable to you? Cardinal Newman once remarked, "If I looked into a mirror and did not see my face, I should have the same feeling as if I were to look into the living world and saw no reflection of its Creator. And that reminds us of Jean Henri Fabre the distinguished naturalist. A visitor asked him, "Do you believe in God, Mr. Fabre?" To which he replied, "I cannot say I believe in God: I see God:

You could take my skin from my body more easily than my faith in God."

Just before the World War, Franklin K. Lane, writing to a friend, used these words: "Mind you I have no religion: I attend no church. I deal every day with hard questions of economics. But," he went on, "we are coming to recognize spiritual forces, and I put my hope for the future, not in a reduction of the high cost of living, nor in any scheme of government, but in the recognition by the people that after all there is a God in the world."

Then if we believe in God, what kind of a being is He? Is He a God made in our own image? Whom do we really worship? James says one may believe in God and yet be a monster. Dean Inge in one of his essays says, "The really important question is not whether God exists but what we mean when we use that word." Perhaps the greatest tragedy of history is that so many professing Christians misrepresent the character of God. When Homer Lane asked the children of his reformatory one day what they would do if God were to come and visit them, they all agreed they would run away and hide. Who that has read the life of Maxim Gorky can help realizing the evil effects of a false conception of God. It is truly a grim and terrible tale. The father died when Maxim was still a baby. So the mother took the child to the home of her parents. The grandfather was a stern, cold, cruel man. He would punish the growing boy unmercifully. He was most particular on going to the confessional. He would talk about God but his God

was an awful creature. The old man's God filled the child with terror. Can we wonder that Maxim Gorky grew up to have a hatred of everything religious!

You could not worship a Being who created this world but who looks down on its sorrow and misery from the hills of glory unmoved;

> "Grinding out life and death, and good and ill,
> No purpose, heart, or mind, or will."

If God be not a God of love, a most damaging blow has been inflicted on the Deity. Faith is not belief in a number of dead dogmas. Faith is having fellowship with our Heavenly Father and with His Son. The Christian conception is that anything attributed to God which is unlike Jesus, must necessarily be false. Jesus came to reveal the Father, to tell us what God is like. He is more than a teacher of the Divine Wisdom; He is a revealer of the Divine love.

(b) Take another postulate. Consider this fact, that our faith can be tested by experience. That is how every scientific discovery is verified. It is first conceived by the imagination and then it is verified by experience. Could anything be fairer than that? And surely the testimony of all the saints and apostles and prophets and martyrs must count for something. It cannot be possible that all down the ages the millions who have given their witness to the power of an endless life are all wrong.

Note too that when it is said a thing is reasonable, this does not mean that it can be scientifically proven.

We cannot prove infinity because our tape line is too short. We do not know that the universe is infinite. We can only say that everywhere we go (and we can go bewilderingly far), the thing is still there.

The poet Coleridge once said something to this effect: "Don't bother about the evidences of Christianity: Just try it." Step inside the circle. The storied window of the cathedral is a hodge-podge from without. Only when the visitor passes in does the glass glow and the figures become clear. And the Christian faith is something one must see from within. Words cannot express the visions and emotions of the soul. It is like trying to describe the odor of a strange unfamiliar flower. Language fails to give a clear impression. President Pritchett traveling in the Alps said to a boy: "Where is Kanderstag?" The boy replied, "I don't know, but yon's the road to it." And this is the answer the Christian gives. Christ is the way. Follow that path and it will lead home. Only by personal experience can these things be proven. There is a great seed firm in Reading, England. And their big advertisement is that they allow no seeds to be sent out until they are first tested on their own farm. Then they recommend them. Do you know any more reasonable test of anything than to be able to say, "Well now if you doubt my word, take it and try it; we've tried it and it works.

The Christian faith works. That is what makes it convincing. The great argument against infidelity is that it makes life hard and difficult. Life is hard anyway. Nobody wants a philosophy at the back of it

that makes it any harder. Christianity helps us to live the kind of life we know we ought to live. There are thousands and tens of thousands of people who believe that Christianity is true but who have never put it to the test in their own lives.

When Spurgeon was once pressed why he did not speak out in defense of the Bible, he exclaimed, "Defend the Bible! I should as soon think of defending a lion. Unchain the book and it will defend itself."

Imagine yourself listening to some great artist—a violinist let us suppose—and imagine some one trying to explain the mechanism of the performance. He talks about point and counterpoint, intervals, diminished sevenths, and classic balance and the whole harmonic structure. You say to him, "Stop that chattering; I do not want to hear about classic balance, this man is speaking to my soul." One can fully appreciate what Cardinal Newman once replied. He was asked to debate Christianity with some famous agnostic. "All right," said the Cardinal, "I will give the agnostic all the time he wants and then when he is through I will simply ask some artist to play Schubert's 'Ave Maria' or 'Songs without words.'" And who has not experienced that very thing in his own life. I have listened to the breakers rolling in on the beach in a storm. I have been moved to wonder and speechless delight watching a sunset on the shores of the Pacific. I have stood on the top of a lofty mountain and been filled with awe, and consternation almost. And if I were asked what it all meant I could not have told you. I could not have given any of these feelings

a logical expression. All I could say is, and all I can now say is, they lifted me up somehow or other and I felt.

"O world, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes;
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world but had no chart
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies.
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science, and his only art."

(c) Take still another great doctrine. Instance the doctrine of repentance. The heart of the prophet in this first chapter is just full of the idea of repentance. Repentance is an instinct. It carries with it the idea that what has happened ought not to have happened and need not have happened. We are sorry that it happened and we are determined that it will not happen again. Isn't it a reasonable thing that when a man begins a new life that he should be genuinely sorry for the old life. And true repentance is a searching radical thing. It goes down to the roots. "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings" the prophet insists in the verse preceding. "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." What good is all your sacrifices and burnt offerings and vain oblations if your hands are red with blood? "It is an abomination to me saith the Lord." The whole chapter is a call to repentance. God loves righteousness. He hates iniquity.

What is the good of our religious fervor if our repentance is not genuine? We profess to be Christians. How about our business? Is it Christian? How about our homes? Are they Christian? How about our lives? Are they Christian? The power of the church depends far more on the justice and truthfulness and righteousness of its members than on the soundness of its creed or the warmth of its religious zeal. If the people who come to this church sabbath after sabbath, if they prove themselves to be no better than the people who do not come, then woe to us; our fellowship is a failure.

(d) Or take once more the final purpose of it all—the restoration of the wanderer—is that not a reasonable thing? To bring back home those who have gone astray. To take the scarlet out of the heart and make it white! Could anything be more appealing to reason than that? "Come let us reason together; Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." The reddest thing in the world is blood and the whitest is snow. Red as blood: white as snow!

One of the most frequent complaints of the Bible is that people do not reason things out. "Israel doth not know, my people do not consider." That strain is heard all through the prophets. Perhaps the commonest simile in Scripture for man is that of a sheep. "All we like sheep have gone astray" and that means silly sheep. Oh if men would only sit down and think!

Those who deny the doctrine of forgiveness are the very ones who belittle the Christian doctrine of sin. Sin is the center of the discussion. "Forgiveness," says

Bernard Shaw, "is a beggar's refuge; we must pay our debts." George Eliot regarded forgiveness as unthinkable. In "Middlemarch" retribution is the whole theme and motive of that great work of art. Indeed the objections to forgiveness to-day are ethical rather than intellectual. There are no intellectual difficulties any more. It is not right, we are told, that there should be any escape from the inexorable law that what we sow we must reap. The objection is moral.

The answer to that is that forgiveness is a personal act and has nothing to do with law. We see it among lovers and friends. We witness it every day among the members of families in their personal dealings with each other. That sweet blessed human fact cannot be lost sight of. And if an earthly parent can grant forgiveness to his child, are we going to deny that same privilege to the Heavenly Parent? To be sure if the world is a mere mechanism, forgiveness is not possible, but the eternal teaching of our faith is that the world is not a mere mechanism. The teaching of the Cross is that love is above all codes, and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind. Here is the "Scarlet Letter"—that great classic of the inner life. And the final word of that wonderful drama is, not that an ironclad law binds us and that we must obey it or be crushed, but that "love reigns at the heart of law and that a pentitent may win his way back to peace."

Vachel Lindsay in a great burst of imagination pictures General Booth entering the heavenly city and this is the theme of his song—forgiveness. "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" And when a

greater than Booth stepped up the golden pavements to meet his Maker I am sure it was the whole theme of his song too, for it was the burden of his whole apostolic ministry: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins."

"Booth led boldly with his big bass drum,
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
The saints smiled gravely and they said "He's come."
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

"Walking lepers followed rank on rank
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath
Unwashed legions with the ways of death—
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

"And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master thro' the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the soldier, while the throng knelt down.

"He saw King Jesus—they were face to face,
And he knelt a weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

X

"I Do Not Ask to See the Distant Scene"

"I have yet many things to say unto you
but ye cannot bear them now."

John 16:12

The Master is here teaching the progressive character of divine revelation. It is part of the great law of evolution. There is a lot of discussion going on to-day over this question of evolution. Many are worried over it. But the fact of evolution is not in doubt any more among scholars. They do not all accept it as applying to the human body, but few question that it operates in every other, or pretty nearly every other, department of life. It is God's chosen method of working. Things mature in this world by growth.

Everything about us is an evolution. Everything is changing. A thing that does not change is not a living thing. One who in the course of his life has not changed some of his views of Christian truth can hardly be said to have lived. At least he has not grown. And a thing that is not growing is in some stage of decay. Perhaps there is not a single subject

of thought about which we think the same as our fathers did fifty years ago.

Growth is the law of everything that lives. Nothing that has not come up from simpler conditions—music, painting, architecture, art, science, trade, economics. Ours is a moving world and it is impossible to keep things stationary on a moving world. Nothing comes into life full grown. Everything develops. It is "first the blade, next the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Once we were offered evolution or Christianity, but lo and behold, as somebody puts it, "we decided to take both." As old Dr. McCosh used to say, "Evolution is nothing in the world but organized causation."

Now the idea of the Master in these words is that we are not capable of receiving all truth at once. We are not so built that it is possible. God's chosen method is the method of search and discovery and graduation, challenging us to peg away at nature's secrets and find things out for ourselves. Who cares for the things that cost him nothing? Where is the lad that prizes the inheritance his father left him, as much as if he had struggled for it and won it by his own unaided efforts? Life is like a game of golf. The very thing that makes life so fascinating and so provoking, so provokingly fascinating, is the mingled success and failure that attend it. Besides, how otherwise could God act toward a developing, expanding creature, with infinite ambitions in his heart? Is there any other possible method of making a weak person strong, save by putting him up against a rough, tough task? How

can wisdom be gained except by the training of the mind in the search for what is hidden? This is the battle of the thinker.

Every advance we make is born out of antagonism. Every energy we put forth may be expressed in terms of the opposition we confront. Every new ray of light we receive is only won by a fight against darkness. Otherwise it would not be our own. Nothing is our own till we have wrested it from resistance—not even our souls. "By your patience ye shall win your souls." The way to truth leads into the valley before it scales the mountain. This is the reason why failure is oftentimes the biggest kind of success.

Education is a slow process, and it is going to take eternity to complete it. The path of discovery is an endless one. There is always going to be something to find out, always something further on. When Edison was asked if we were not near the end of inventions, his reply was, "there is no end to inventions." In a world such as ours, one never knows what one is going to meet just around the corner. What a splendid epitaph that is on the stone of John Richard Green, the historian, "He died learning." God reveals truth pretty much as He brings in the morn. The darkness is not scattered in a moment. The day does not come in a lightning flash. It comes leisurely. First a faint glimmering touches the hills, then a fading star in the paling west, then the flush of dawn, then gradually warmer colors are seen in the east, and then the great Orb Himself peeps above the horizon. Step by step the wonderful familiar miracle is wrought.

And it is just so when things happen in the spiritual world. Revelation is not given in one great sudden outburst. The Master said there were things which the disciples could not understand at the time, but which would be made clear to them later on. There always have been those who could not stand the strain of new truth. It is quite possible indeed that a sudden unveiling of truth for which we were not prepared might do harm, might blind us so that we could not see at all. Every revelation must be adapted to the organ that receives it. We are not given fullness of light: we are saved by the gentleness that filters out the light.

I: We know how true this is in the realm of education. A child starts with his A B C's. B O Y boy, C A T cat; two and two are four; three and three are six. Then he is taught subtraction, division, the multiplication table, then fractions, decimals, percentage. In a few years he is tackling Euclid, then he goes on to the calculus and the sines and cosines. Instruction is regulated according to capacity. No teacher starts his six-year-old pupil with the mysteries of quadratics. The child could not stand that test. You cannot pour the waters of the Amazon into the Bronx River. You do not give your little lad a razor or a revolver. You do not talk to him about psychology. You cannot hurry when you are teaching children. The period of development may be longer or shorter, but room must always be left for this element of time. Teaching, some one says, is like playing dominoes. If your opponent puts down a four, you must match it with a four.

In his "Up from Slavery" Booker Washington tells of an old colored man during the days of slavery who wanted to learn how to play the guitar. In his desire to take lessons, he applied to one of his young masters to teach him. The young man replied, "All right Uncle Jake, I will give you some lessons but I am going to charge you for them. I will charge a dollar for the first lesson, fifty cents for the second and twenty-five for the third." To which Uncle Jake replied, "All right boss, I'se agreed, only I wants yer to give me dat las lesson first." So many of God's children would like to learn the last lesson first. Horace Bushnell in a letter to a friend tells a suggestive story: "When I was in college, I once undertook to read Coleridge's 'Aids to Reflection.' But the author seemed foggy and unintelligible and I closed the book and laid it upon the shelf where it remained a long time. Meanwhile my mind went on thinking and maturing, and one day, my eye falling on the book, I took it down and began to read it, and behold all was lucid and delightful."

And in the school of later life the same law holds. We cannot explain these things to people, unless their minds are capable of taking them in. I doubt if Einstein could ever make clear to me the mysteries of relativity. Why God does not reveal His will instantly is not the question. It is enough that he does not. His way is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little. He speaks "by divers portions and in divers manners." Before Christ came the world knew only one way of treating evil and that was by reprisal. The Old Testament said "An eye for an eye, a tooth

for a tooth." If some one gives you a black eye, you give him a black eye back again. That was the Old Testament; but the New Testament says, If some one gives you a black eye, turn to him the other and tell him to discolor it too. He superseded the give-as-good-as-you-get rule by the divine law of forgiveness. The real morality of the Bible is its final morality. "This is my beloved Son, hear Him."

How often we hear the criticism made, why did not the Master tell us certain things? Why did He not enlarge more on the bodily resurrection or the nature of the future life? Why did He not explain more definitely His own second coming? Why did He not give some clear unmistakable statement on the Virgin Birth? Why did He not make perfectly distinct what we are to understand by the inerrancy of the Scriptures? Why did He not tell us who wrote the Pentateuch? Well for one reason because many of these questions are not really fundamental. A fundamental is something vital, something essential. But essential to what? To the integrity of Christian truth? To a system of dogmatic theology? Or to a victorious Christian life? The aim of all theology is holiness of life; "that the man of God may be perfect." And when the question is put directly, who will be so bold as to claim that the question of who wrote the Pentateuch, or a certain pre-millennial or post-millennial theory, is fundamental to holiness of life.

Furthermore, the Master Himself said, and He said it very unequivocally, that many of these unveilings, such as the nature of the future life, could not be made

because their minds were not sufficiently prepared. "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things." Even had He told us what the house of many mansions was like, and how it was built, we would not be capable of receiving the announcement. So often we hear the remark made, "Why does not God give us what is best for us without our asking?" But a deeper question is, Can He? Can God give us the best things till we are ready for them? Can He give a prayerless man the blessings and comforts of prayer? I have heard men say, Why does not God forgive us all and make an end of it? But again the deeper question is, Can He do it? Can God forgive a man who does not want to be forgiven? God's forgiveness is a self-communication. To be forgiven is to be healed. It is a moral power of recovery imparted to the soul. And that implies co-operation and partnership. You may be yearning to impart something to a friend but he may not be interested. While you are talking he may be napping or star-gazing. When you finish he may say, What was it you were talking about? God cannot, any more than man, reach our hearts until we give Him our minds and wills.

It must be confessed that with the Hebrew people spiritual development was slow. Sometimes indeed with us it is slow. Like some people their time of maturity seems to ripen late. Mirabeau was forty years old before he manifested any signs of his real power. The world never heard of Von Moltke until he was sixty-six, and he was almost seventy when he

proved himself a great soldier. Here is Stonewall Jackson. We know the kind of man he was because his name betrays it. Colonel Henderson in his biography tells us of the long years of preparation, but when the crisis came the strength to meet it was there. If some men are ahead of their time, others seem to be behind it. John Wycliffe in England was just as great and brave as Luther. But he failed, one historian writes, because he came a hundred years too soon. It is quite possible, is it not, that Woodrow Wilson came too soon? Luther came at the nick of time, when the world was ready for his message. God's trains never keep us waiting. They are always on the dot. When the world needs a Lincoln, Lincoln arrives. Did not the Master say, "Mine hour is not yet come"? But? when it did come, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

II: And that leads us to the next thought, viz.: how the same law is true of God's education of the race. His revelation to the race is a gradual one. It is a stepping from limited to larger knowledge. God's ways of working are sometimes slow but they are always sure. He waits His appointed time. One morning in 1492 Columbus landed on an island in the West Indies. He did not know that he had discovered a great world. He was looking for a new road to India but he discovered a new continent. A few years later Ponce de Leon landed on the shores of Florida, but he only stayed a few days. John Cabot came out in 1497. Then Sir Francis Drake made another flying trip. Perhaps we ought not to call it a flying trip when we

remember that he took thirty-seven days to come out. In spite of several costly attempts, the 16th century closed with no English settlement on the shores of America. It seems passing strange that 128 years passed before a little company of men and women set sail to make this great rich land their home. Yes, we waited 128 years for the *Mayflower*.

And all through the Bible we find this principle at work. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." But that Son did not appear until the fullness of time was ripe. And after He came He promised larger and richer developments. "Ye shall see greater things than these." They were not ready yet for a full unveiling. "I have many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now." "When the spirit of truth is come He will lead you into all the truth." The most foolish thing conceivable is to try to stop the advance of scholarship. Why should we be afraid of inquiry if our faith is true? No one can do anything against the truth. Christianity is not a never changing lake but a constantly changing river, ever gaining new tributaries, and widening and deepening as it nears the sea. Paul speaks of the unsearchable riches of Christ. He means the deeper he went, the more wonders he saw. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God."

A book to be found in almost every minister's library is entitled a "History of Doctrine." Doctrine has a history. It is a development. Does doctrine have a history? you say. Why, certainly. Take the doctrine of Immortality. How dimly it shines in the Old Tes-

tament. The glory of the New Testament is that it brings life and immortality to light. At Sinai God was revealed in a thunderstorm, on a lonely mountain, in the image of a man. At the sight the people did exceedingly fear and quake. But in the Gospels God is a spirit. Suppose Moses had spoken the truths of the Sermon on the Mount to the Israelites at the Red Sea. What would these marvelous beatitudes have meant to them? Almost nothing. They were not ready for such exalted ideals. They were children. They needed blocks and pictures and toys and dolls and symbols—an ark, an altar, a sacrifice, a pillar of cloud, a pillar of fire.

As when an ocean liner is sailing out of the harbor she must creep slowly to avoid collision, so when a new truth is launched there are many obstacles in its path and it must content itself with very tardy progress until it reaches the open sea. The morality of the Pentateuch is the morality of the primer. As the nation advanced more light was given. It is not fair to ask the morality of Isaiah from the people of Abraham's day, nor the spirituality of Paul from the minor prophets. There is much in the earlier books of the Old Testament that conflicts with the Gospels. Perfectly idiotic to deny that. When Jael is praised by the prophetess Deborah for the slaughter of Sisera—that is simply the imperfect standards of the time. It was a cruel treacherous thing to do, even to an enemy—to invite him into your tent and promise him safety, and then to put him to death while sleeping. From the Christian point of view the command to annihilate the

Canaanites is indefensible. Samson and Barak and Gideon are catalogued in the 11th of Hebrews among the heroes of faith, but they are a long, long shot from our conception of heroism. We cannot read the whole Bible from a New Testament point of view. We must not judge the journey by one mile.

The only explanation of these things is the principle of accommodation. God permitted many things because He was educating the race. He gave temporary approval of some things that in later revelations were condemned. Polygamy was part of the Mosaic law, as was slavery. Abraham had two wives, Hagar and Sarah. Jacob had two wives, Rachel and Leah. These things were tolerated on the principle of accommodation. The aim being always to lift men up to a higher plane. What an injustice to judge Abraham by the 20th century! The spirit of the New Testament condemns both polygamy and slavery. The Mosaic ideal of marriage moves upward to the Christian ideal. Christianity never makes a crusade against slavery. It inculcates a spirit that makes slavery intolerable. Its overthrow was accomplished not by direct but by indirect attack. Slavery was doomed because it was seen to be incompatible with the mind of Christ. As Canon Mozley puts it: "The morality of a progressive dispensation is not the morality with which it starts but the morality with which it ends." "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, but I say unto you."

Mr. H. G. Wells makes a motion to write a new Bible, and there are many who are ready to second

that motion. But we must be just to the good Book. We must not blame it for being something that it does not pretend to be. It nowhere claims to be a perfect revelation. It describes the stages of religious thought from crude ideas to the inerrant teachings of Jesus. One of our great Scottish writers, George MacDonald, puts these words into the mouth of one of his characters: "Oh I wish I had never been made." "Why my dear child," replied her friend, "you are not made yet: you are only being made." That is a great truth. As Browning says, "The best is yet to be." We are becoming. Some one says, "If I were God I would not reveal all the secrets of science in a moment, because the best part of knowledge is the search for it: I would not unveil all the useful inventions at once, because no invention is any good until the race is ready for it." Sir William Hamilton compared truth to a bird, and the method of getting it to a chase; to which Lessing added: "If the Almighty holding in one hand the bird, and in the other hand search for the bird, presented them both to me and asked me to choose, with all humility but without hesitation I should choose the latter." And Malebranche holding to the same figure: "If I held truth captive in my hand, I would set it free for the pleasure of the pursuit."

The great lesson then to learn is this, that God cannot give any blessing to the world until the world is ready for it. He cannot give peace to the world until the world is ready for peace. He cannot give prohibition to the world until the world is ready for pro-

hibition. He cannot give self-government to the world until the world is ready for self-government.

Otherwise, it is not a spiritual attainment; it is only a mechanical attachment. Good laws given to a people unprepared for them only do harm. Some one once said to Solon, "Have you given the people the best possible laws?" To which the great man replied, "I have given them the best laws of which they are capable." If you wish to give a man a bank note, you can give it to him at any time. You can give it personally; you can send it through a friend; you can put it in an envelope and forward it through the mail. But if you want to give that man a spiritual gift, you cannot do it until he is ready to receive it and make it his own. You cannot send it to him as a Christmas present.

So let us pray that we may be ready for God's gifts when they come to us. Pray not for larger mercies. Pray for larger minds and hearts. Pray not for more light. The light is sufficient. Pray for larger windows. Pray for a greater hospitality. Pray for a deeper understanding. Then the blessing will be yours.

XI

"Go Spread Your Trophies at His Feet"

"Now Peter and John went up together
into the temple at the hour of prayer."

Acts 3:1

And you remember what happened. A cripple was healed. It was the first recorded miracle of the Apostolic Church. That alone gives it distinction. The first trophy to lay at the feet of the Master! And it was there the Apostles laid it.

The miracle made a profound impression on the people. It seems to have been a notorious case. The poor beggar was evidently a familiar sight at the gates of Zion. He was helpless. No doubt he had to be carried there every morning and carried back again every evening. And this had gone on for years. Everybody in Jerusalem knew the lame beggar at the Temple. They may not have known the High Priest as he passed in and out, but they all knew the cripple. The poor fellow was over forty years of age, and the thing had gone on for years. He had been there so long that he almost seemed a part of the institution. Doubtless his relatives were poor too: so they bore him daily to

the same place and leaned him up against the wall and left him there for the day. He seemed to have a monopoly on the spot.

Now there are some observations that it may be profitable to draw from this familiar story. And the first is this, that after the resurrection, the Apostles kept up the practice of public worship. Peter and John were going up to the afternoon service as usual. These two leading Apostles were much together in these early days. And it is worth noting that they maintained the old habit of going to church. They went to the temple with the common people at the hour of prayer. The wonderful gift of healing which was bestowed on them, had not lifted them above the duty of worshiping God like other less favored mortals.

The church-going habit, it must be confessed, has fallen into sad disrepair of late years. The reasons given are many and most of them are thinly veiled. Perhaps they can be summed up in one big all-inclusive apology, that other things are considered of greater moment. Golf and motoring and baseball and football and fishing and hunting and autoing are more important. A friend was telling of entertaining a week-end party in her country home last spring. When Sunday morning came around she suggested that all go to church. One of the girls spoke up: "Such a beautiful morning! Oh it will be a terrible waste of time." "Yes," another voiced, "and such a waste of gray matter."

One could wish that such an attitude was unusual, but is it unusual? And with many who would not be

quite so frank, is it not a good deal how they feel? When we look out upon the world to-day we must confess that the outlook is not bright. There is an ominous drift from the call of public praise. And in the commercialism of the age, in which the sabbath day is suffering along with a lot of other things, the very purpose of church-going is being lost sight of. Many of us were brought up to feel that we had an appointment with our Maker at 11 o'clock on Sunday mornings. Now men have other appointments that are more urgent. And the loss is great. There is an inspiration in the group that cannot be had in the individual. Every public speaker understands this. We call it atmosphere. It takes many petals to make the rose and they all must work together. The fireman knows that left to itself the lighted match goes out. It is only when the pieces of kindling are assembled that the flame passes from stick to stick. It is very doubtful if Christian civilization can propagate itself without the flesh and blood of a settled institution. Indeed, Christianity apart from the church has not been an appreciable factor in the betterment of mankind.

It is very doubtful too, if without church attendance the function of corporate religion can be long sustained. Bernard Shaw has a little brochure on "Going to Church." He tells us that he is an unbeliever himself but notwithstanding he goes to church. "The purpose of a cathedral," he says, is "to point the way to the cathedral within me." Gibbon was another unbeliever who stuck up loyally for the church. His argu-

ment was that you could not build up a nation without religion. Walter Pater was still another. He was always in his pew. These men felt that irreligion is all right for the individual but it doesn't work for the state. Perhaps Bishop Gore did not overstate the matter when he said, "No sabbath means no church; no church means no worship; no worship means no religion; no religion means no morality; no morality means no society; no society means no government; no government means anarchy."

It is worth observing too that this poor paralytic was at the gate of the temple. He was not down in the market place among the traders. He was at the very gate of the temple. That is suggestive. Even to-day whoso enters a cathedral or chapel in any part of continental Europe, is almost sure to be compelled to pass several mendicants at the door. It leads one to wonder if it is not true that it is the people who frequent the temple who are most thoughtful of the poor. The statistics on that score are convincing. It is religious people who are supporting very largely the eleemosynary institutions of the world. Religion and compassion have always gone hand in hand together. This poor man knew where to go for alms. He knew where people's hearts were softest. He knew where trade was good. The man who loves God most is the man who will love his fellow men the most. There were three services daily in the synagogue, at nine in the morning, at noon, and then at three in the afternoon. These hours of prayer were to him his hours of business.

Why is it that ministers of religion are so besieged with beggars? I recall one person. She came for financial assistance. We had never met before. "I come to your church occasionally," she began, "although I am frank to admit that I do not believe what you preach, but then I enjoy the service. I'm an agnostic, but I think you are sincere." I thanked her for the compliment. I was reminded of James Martineau who used frequently to go to Spurgeon's tabernacle. A friend said to him: "Why do you go to hear that man so often? You do not believe what he says." "No," said Martineau, "but he does." It is splendid when the world thinks that we are at least sincere. The criticism leveled against preachers to-day so often is that they are not sincere, and that many of them do not believe half of what they are saying. Every true minister is happy to be approached by the poor and the needy. It is the right thing to do. What are we here for? If men and women cannot come to us when there is need, to whom can they go? We profess to be the followers of Him whose great passion was to help people. And if we could only weed out the quacks and sharpers and swindlers who flock to us and waste our time and steal our sympathy and empty our scrips, the interviews would be more encouraging.

It is not difficult to picture this cripple in his usual place sitting at the Beautiful Gate, an eyesore perhaps, a bundle of deformed humanity. The crowd is passing in and hardly anybody notices him. Perhaps a Pharisee in his broad phylactery bound around his forehead flings a piece of silver, and makes it ring ostentatiously

on the marble pavement. How eagerly he reaches out for it! Perhaps a little lad runs back and slyly slips a coin into his hand, and then hastens to join his mother who had suggested the gift. Then he keeps looking back till he is lost in the crowd.

But one day something wonderful happened. Two men with a strange light in their faces were passing by. They fastened their eyes on him, we are told. The expression is an unusual one. They were on their way to worship but they fixed their gaze on him. It was a searching look as if some divine fire was flashing through their eyes. No doubt Peter and John often passed him before, and paid little attention to his sad plight. But to-day "fastening their eyes on him," one of them said: "Look on us." The man gave instant heed expecting, of course, a dole. He knows Peter is going to give him something—he thinks money—but how his heart must have sunk within when he heard the words: "Silver and gold have I none." It was silver and gold he wanted. However, the last sentence stirred his hopes, "Silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." That surely was a bold command to make. How did Peter know that the man would so suddenly believe? What a daring mighty challenge is Faith!

Then Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, and he walked inside the gates, leaping and praising God. For many years he had watched the crowd pass in: now he passed in himself. The man

rose up at Peter's word, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." It was faith, faith in Peter, and simultaneously faith in Peter's Christ. The man had his faith in Christ quickened and confirmed by the faith of Peter. Peter's faith and the man's faith met, as it were. He believed that by the power of God he could get up, and so he got up and stood on his feet. Note how Peter himself explains it: "The name of Christ, through faith in His name hath made this man strong, yea the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Cannot you hear him singing "O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together"? "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and delivered him." And after the service was over, the people came down the steps and the crowd got bigger and bigger. And Peter was so moved by the Spirit that he started in to preach a sermon, taking the cripple for his text.

Well, after all, that is the important thing, the sermon. And was it not a wonderful sermon? And the most wonderful thing about it is that Peter gives all the credit to the Lord. The Apostles take no glory to themselves at all. Indeed they seem surprised at the sensation produced. "Why marvel ye at this?" they say. This is not the work of man: this is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ whom ye slew and crucified. We are simply the channels of His power. God hath raised Him up. We are witnesses of that fact. That surely was a bold statement to make. "Ye denied the Holy One and asked for a murderer to be granted

unto you." Remember Peter is talking to the men (some of them dignitaries) who railroaded the Master to the cross, and in the very city where He was hooted and scourged and crucified. If they could have gainsaid the statement, why did they not do it? It was only six weeks since that the thing happened. The tragedy was fresh in their minds. Yet six weeks after it was done, these Apostles were proclaiming publicly to His enemies and accusers that He was risen from the dead. And the impression made was so great that 5,000 were converted.

Then does not the whole incident teach us too that the church is called to-day to a great, wide, far-reaching ministry of healing? Has not this part of our work been sorely neglected? Why is it that the miracles of our Lord are mostly miracles of cure? Too long the church has acted as if she felt that God is not greatly concerned with the physical ills of mankind. Contrariwise, it is the will of God that sickness and suffering should not be. We are doing His will when we fight these things. Plague and pestilence and every manner of sickness and every stamp of disease are enemies to be overcome. Preventible disease ought to be prevented. The man who gives his life trying to find a cure for cancer, let us say, is as truly a martyr as William Tyndale or any canonized saint of the church. The story in the gospel of Luke of the poor woman who had been bound down with an infirmity for eighteen years will be recalled. Her neighbors had looked at her and said, 'What a visitation of God.' They told her no doubt to try and be resigned. But our

Lord did not say that God had bound her. He said Satan had bound her these many years, but the Son of God could liberate her. And even if it was the sabbath day He was going to loose her from her infirmities.

Pain is never the will of Providence. If faith will heal a sick man it is his duty to exercise faith. If suggestion will bring relief he should invoke the aid of every helpful suggestion. If going to a hospital for an operation promises recovery he should submit to that. There are many ways of healing to-day that the Apostles knew nothing of. We have powers that they did not have. They knew nothing of hospitals and antiseptics and nurses and surgeons of skill as we know these blessed allies now. Most sensible people believe in hospitals, but hospitals alone are not going to abolish pain and suffering. Our medical schools may separate all the germs of all the ills but that is not going to abrogate disease. So long as sin rules in the heart of man, just so long will disease hold sway.

And anyway suggestion of itself is of little value. Christian Science is helpless. Drugs can do nothing. Even surgery has no healing virtue. It can cut away obstructions, that is all. It is nature that does the healing, God in nature. "We dress the wound; God heals it." Yes, even faith is impotent. We hear men speak of faith healing but faith has no power to heal. It is God who does the healing, not faith. The power is the power of God. Faith is only the instrument, but what a mighty blessed instrument when He wields it!

Recently Dr. Cabot was lecturing in Boston on psychotherapy. And when he had finished his lecture some one in the audience spoke up, "What you say Doctor may be true of functional diseases, but do you believe that organic diseases, diseases like cancer for instance, can be cured in that way?" Dr. Cabot's reply was: "I have never heard of a case of cancer being cured by faith, but I would like to say this, I have never yet found myself in the presence of any disease that baffled me, without thinking, Well now if I only had a hundred times the personality that I have, who would say what is and what is not possible." Jesus was not a psychotherapist in the sense in which we use that word to-day. He was not a teacher of suggestion or autosuggestion. His power was the power of God passing through the personality of the individual. The thing we have to reckon with is the personality of Jesus Christ and the effect of that personality upon the bodies as well as the souls of men.

And then one thought more. Let us not suppose that because we have no money we can do nothing to help the impotent men and women who are round about us. We may not have the silver of eloquence or the gold of human learning. We may have precious little of this world's goods. But we may have stores of spiritual life and love and we may go around lifting men up into a life of joy and praise. The best treasure is the treasure communicated from the heart. I can help some lame man. I can read to some blind man. To impart strength and hope and courage is after all the great thing. Oftentimes the help needed most is not

material help, but the help that comes from inward resources. The men who have made the world rich have not always been the rich men. What did Peter have? He had a grip on Jesus Christ. He had the power to inspire confidence. He had the love of God in his soul. Silver and gold can do much but they cannot do all. They can build libraries but they cannot write books to fill the shelves. When we call in the doctor, we do not care how much silver and gold he has or whether he has any. The negative list is beside the mark. What we do insist on his having is a well-equipped mind, a skillful hand and a warm heart. It is not what we do not know. It is what we do know. "Our knowledge however small, is mightier than our ignorance however great." Take what you have and hand it over to the Master for His blessing. Nothing but He can use it! We are to dedicate every skill of hand and gift of mind for service. Religion does not clip any legitimate wing. All things are ours because we are His. Can you sing? Sing for His glory. Can you paint? Paint to His praise. There is no talent that has not its place in the Christian life. The Christian life is a life of helping others and that can be done in galaxies of ways. Have you a strong imagination and have you used it in ways of evil? Why not baptize it unto His name? It can make the dustiest road beautiful. Have you been a profane man? Have you been eloquent in cursing your Maker? Why not dedicate henceforth your lips to His worship. Anatole France in one of his stories has an acrobat perform his stunts before the altar. He was doing it

as a religious act. He felt it was the only talent he had and he was using it with all the skill he possessed. And it was accepted too. General Booth used to say that whenever he heard a popular song in the music halls he liked to put it to religious words and use it in his Army meetings. He felt that the Devil had no right to all the fine strains. He captured it for the King. Let us do likewise.

"Go spread your trophies at His feet
And crown Him Lord of all."

XII

"Sun, Moon and Stars Forgot, Upward I Fly"

> "Lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things that bringeth out their host by number."
>
> *Isaiah* 40:26

Some one has remarked that reading this 40th chapter of Isaiah is like walking over mountains that lie a mile apart. One needs the step and the stride of a giant. These old prophets knew quite a little about the heavenly constellations and their movements. Nobody knows who the first astronomer was, or when he lived, or what his name was, but we do know that the stars bewildered these holy men of old, fascinated them, inspired them. Job in his great poem speaks of the bands of Orion. He speaks of Arcturus and Alcyone and the Hyades and Mazzoreth in his season. The apparent motions of the moon were well known to the Israelites because the Hebrew year was lunar. The Bible is not a text book on astronomy; it nowhere pretends to be. Astronomy was never developed among the ancient Israelites into a real science. All the same, there is much in it that is trustworthy.

When we lift up our eyes and behold the heavenly

bodies, the first thing that strikes us is their number. They are indeed a host. "That bringeth out their host by number." And if Isaiah could use the word host, what word are we going to use? There were no glasses in those days and only about 6,000 luminaries can be detected without a glass. But in Galileo's time they discovered the concave lens and he computed the number at 30,000. A hundred years later, Sir William Herschel came along with a larger lens and he counted more than twenty million. Then came photography and the camera laid bare about 100 million. And to-day astronomers tell us it is quite impossible to compute the number of the starry wonders. We can only count seven in the Pleiades, but when we use the sensitive plate, we know there are 3,000 in that one constellation alone.

Then when we leave the solar system and look out into the sidereal, we are calmly told that the nearest of those stars is twenty-five billions of miles away; billions note, not millions. I fear we are apt to forget what a billion is. We are becoming so familiar with the word in economics that it has lost much of its bewildering magnitude. The way one astronomer puts it is this: "If you were in Sirius and wanted to see our sun, it would be like looking at a half penny 1600 miles away." One would require a mighty glass to see a half penny as far off as Omaha. Space has very little meaning for us to-day. Astronomy has wellnigh annihilated the word. The vastness is too inconceivable. The mind cannot grasp the solar system much less the sidereal. It staggers the imagination.

The whole mystery is too appalling—the incomprehensible reaches, the impenetrable stretches. Unless there is some Mighty Heart back of it all to love and trust, the situation is truly desperate. Man has discovered a universe that his little mind cannot contain. It is too big for him. He is crushed by his own discoveries.

In his poem, "The Torch-Bearers," Alfred Noyes tells of the completion of the great 100-inch telescope on Mt. Wilson, California. It is the largest reflector in the world. Mr. Noyes was invited to spend the night on the top of the mountain when the giant glass was first unveiled. It was expected that the photographs would unveil millions of worlds never before seen by mortal eye. He tells how Professor Hale mounted the ladder and looked through the great tube. It was the first test they made!

"To-morrow night"—so wrote the chief, "we try
Our great new telescope the 100 inch.
Your Milton's optic tube has grown in power
Since Galileo, famous blind and old,
Talked with him in that prison of the sky.
We creep to power by inches. Even to-night
Our own old 60 has its work to do;
And now our 100 inch. I hardly dare
To think what this new muzzle of ours may find.
Come up, and spend the night among the stars
Here on our mountain top."

But we are not thinking particularly just now of the starry heavens. There are other heights in life—

heights to us perhaps that are even more momentous. Hasn't everybody some sort of mountain in his life? It is difficult to conceive of a life where the outlook is one dead level flat. Even those lives that seem most monotonous—even these have oftentimes great spiritual summits could we but only see them. These are the peaks to which the soul looks up in eager longing and in earnest quest.

I. Take for instance our work. We are so hurried and jostled in the battle of life that half the time we lose sight of its purpose. So much of our time and strength are occupied with making a *living* that we forget all about making a *life*. We have become more interested in machinery than in men. When we consider the industrial world we see automobiles, ships, railroads, shops, banks, telephones, forges, factories and all our mechanical devices. The purpose of it all is to produce and add to the world's wealth. But is there no goal higher than this? Are these the loftiest peaks? Has industry no spiritual meaning? Is the machine meant for man, or is man meant for the machine? This, after all, is the great test question. The simple truth is that everything we do has two sides—a side toward heaven and a side toward earth. There is not a task we undertake, that may not elevate or debase us, according to the spirit in which we meet it. Everything has its spiritual aspect. We are always emphasizing our work, but the great thing is not our work but the kind of men our work is making of us. It is not the house the carpenter builds that is the important thing; it is what the carpenter himself

becomes while he is building it. We are constantly turning things upside down; we put secondary things on top. Max Beerbohm has an essay in which he claims that many people to-day seem to think that criticizing a thing calls for greater gifts than creating it. He pictures for us the literary scribbler sitting at his desk and berating the author who has created the classic he is rash enough to disparagingly review.

We look around and we see men who have no upward glance. Their eyes are on the pavement. They see only the dust, the dirt, the oil, the grease. They view the material part of the business and the mechanism. It is all noise and clash and confusion. They do not see the real meaning of shops and banks and factories. A well-known divine tells us of the service in his church last Easter, when everybody was so uplifted and thrilled after listening to the Hallelujah Chorus that they seemed to be in heavenly places. A lady turned to one of his members sitting in the same pew and said to her: "Would you mind telling me where you got your hat?" Who does not feel for such people? One would like to say to them, "Lift up your eyes and behold." Take a look at the hills and the stars. The great things of life are not below, they are above. The enduring product is not steel but soul. In plants there is an instinct prompting them to rise from underground darkness up into the realms of light and joy. This passion for the sky is the symbol of the Christian life. The soul demands the sky. No true life is possible on low levels. There is a story of a man who captured an eagle and tethered it at his

kitchen door, making it eat its meals out of a tin plate. It is typical of the multitudes we see, who were meant for celestial flights but who live in the soul's back-yard.

The American people are supposed to be a highly civilized people, but it is extremely questionable if we are a people of real culture. Because the two are not always found together. Civilization represents the external values—property, government, commerce, trade. Culture, on the other hand, includes the inner assets,—truth, beauty, art, philosophy, faith, religion. Civilization dwells in a world of material things: culture belongs to the spirit. It is a case of the outer versus the inner. Business is driving men so terrifically hard these days. There never was a time when people were living so much before the footlights. A great orchestral leader says we are living under the dominion of din. An eminent visitor from the other side tells an experience that happened to him some years ago in this city of ours. He was down visiting the lower part of Manhattan, the banks, the stock exchange, and the financial houses where men sweat and scheme for the gold and silver. One day as he was walking up Wall Street, he lifted his eye to the spire of Trinity, and the old bells were pealing out a familiar hymn. He could barely hear it with the racket. But listening intently he caught the tune, "Hark, hark my soul, angelic songs are swelling." "Far, far away like bells at evening pealing." Why, he adds, it was a moment with a thrill to it. "It sort of pinned me to the pavement." There in that spot where the money world

had its very throne, there fell on my ears a song that spoke of Heaven. "I was hearing the Lord's song in a strange land."

II. And the same is true of our *pleasures.* Some one has said that of the 110 million people in our country 109 million are living for pleasure. Perhaps that is an exaggerated estimate, but certainly the army is a vast one. Here in New York especially is the throne of Vanity Fair. For some strange reason we have come to feel to-day that pleasure is everything. There is undoubtedly an excessive evaluation of it. It is prized more than anything else. Pleasure is the great thing. And the real danger is that if one gets into the current, it is likely to sweep him farther than he meant to go. It is very apt to carry him too far. The first commandment in the modern decalogue seems to be: "Thou shalt enjoy thyself."

There is a remarkable picture by George Frederick Watts entitled, "The Pursuit of Pleasure." It is a long trail leading to a precipice and at the foot of the precipice there is the dim glimpse of a graveyard. The trail is packed with men and women pushing and jostling one another, everybody struggling to be the first to reach the figure of Pleasure, as she stands beckoning just above the brink. And if you look closely you will note that there is not one single face looking up. Everybody's eye is glued to the ground. One is oppressed with the tautness, the strained attitude, the breathless expressions. It is the world's pursuit of Pleasure. The world is feverishly chasing the *pomps* and *splendors* and *voluptuous* delights that fascinate

and enslave men's hearts. See that boy with his head buried deep in a paper. It is a betting paper. His eye is scanning the races. How one would like to say to that young lad: "Young man, lift up your eyes." Get up on higher ground. "Get thee up into a mountain." Wonderful how far one can see from a mountain! There is a peak in the Adirondacks from which can be seen the spires of Montreal. The sacred mountain Fujiyama dominates the ocean for one hundred miles as you enter the city of Yokohama. Get thee up into a mountain. Look at this matter of pleasure from a lofty height. In one of the old Greek stories we read that those who once heard Apollo sing, never wanted to hear their own voices again. Only give the soul a taste of the highest and it soon tires of all that falls below. There is no discontent with the low orders of life because they have never had anything to awaken desire. Every life should have its mountain of Transfiguration. There is no view in the valley. Get up into the clearer air, above the dust and smoke and dirt of life's rude struggle. Believe in the higher pleasures and the possibilities of bliss they hold out to us. He who would hit the bull's eye of true happiness must aim above it. Mountaineers tell us about the snake line. Snakes are not mountain climbers. They are rarely found more than 1200 feet above sea level. Get up above the snake line. Those who live on the mountain tops are in no danger from the venomous rattler. Keep down in the lowlands and you are apt to be bitten. Like the battle of Lookout Mountain, the great victories of life are usually fought above the clouds. If you

go up far enough in an airplane the bullet cannot reach you, or if it does, by the time it arrives the thing is out of breath. "We should fight our temptations on radiant heights. Fight them under God's own eye: Fight them in Beulah land, within sight of the Holy City."

It is interesting to note how all God's appointments were on the mountain top. To Moses He said, "Meet me early on the mountain." When Abraham was told to sacrifice his son it was to a mountain he was summoned. There is hardly an appointment in all Scripture that does not convene on a mountain. There's Sinai, Nebo, Gerizim, Olivet, Calvary. Lift up your eyes. Lift up your heart. *Sursum corda.* Get away from the narrow limits that shut you in. If you climb the zenith, heaven and earth are on your side. The stars will fight with you; the strong mountains will stand around you; the great deep will call to you. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." "My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth,"

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you."

And then and best of all, there's the joy and the peace of living up there. Whymper, the Alpine climber, used to say of one of his guides that he was only happy when 10,000 feet in air. The mountains are the first

to catch the morning ray. Jesus Christ never leads His children into the catacombs. They are cold, damp, chilly places. He takes us up and makes us sit together in heavenly altitudes with Himself. There was a story going the rounds last winter of a woman who was passing through New York. She came into the Grand Central by the New Haven. She took the shuttle to Times Square. There she floundered round a while and took the subway by mistake to the Battery. Then she came back underground to the Pennsylvania station and went out through the tunnel to Manhattan Junction. When she was asked for her impressions she answered that she had had a fine *worm's eye* view of the city. Well, there are many who have a fine worm's eye view of human life. But who would not rather have a bird's eye view of it? One can imagine a cow browsing in the field contentedly and saying to herself: What care I for beauty or for botany? The clover is sweet; I don't want it explained. That is the vision of the poor cow. But man is a different creature. No one has ever put it better than Augustine: "Thou hast made us for Thyself and no one is ever at rest until they rest in Thee."

"I cried, 'Dear Angel, lead me to the
heights
And spur me to the top.'
The angel answered, 'Stop
And set thy house in order, make it
fair

For absent ones who may be speeding there;
Then we will talk of heights.'

"I put my house in order, 'Now lead on.'
The angel said, 'Not yet;
Thy garden is beset
With thorns and tares: go weed it, so all those
Who come to gaze may find the beauteous rose,
Then we will journey on.'

"I weeded well my garden, 'All is done.'
The angel shook his head.
'A beggar stands,' he said.
'Outside thy gates: till thou hast given heed
And soothed his sorrows and supplied his need
Say not that all is done.'

"The beggar left me singing. 'Now at last,
At last the path is clear.'
'Nay, there is one draws near
Who seeks like thee the difficult highway;

He lacks thy courage, cheer him
thou this day,
Then we will cry *"at last."'*

"I helped my weaker brother. 'Now
the heights!
Oh guide me, angel, guide.'
The presence at my side
With radiant face said, 'Look,
where are we now?'
And lo! we stood upon the moun-
tain's brow—
The heights, the shining heights."

And John Oxenham has a little poem with the same lesson.

"To every man there openeth
A way and ways and a way.
And the high soul climbs the high
way,
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go."

"The easy path of the lowland
Hath little of grand or new,

But the toilsome ascent leads on
To a grand and glorious view.
Peopled and warm the valley,
Lonely and chill the height,
But the path that is nearest the
storm-cloud
Is nearest the stars of light."

XIII

"Outside the Fast-Closed Door"

"Be given to hospitality."
Romans 12:13.

WHAT a wonderful chapter this 13th of Romans is! After the keenest and profoundest doctrinal discussion we have the most practical advice. Like the pilot who has steered his ship safely past the rocks and through the rapids, he is now in quieter waters. Like the aviator who has been performing brilliant stunts above the clouds he has now landed. First we have the great fundamental truth of justification by faith analyzed and systematized with matchless and consummate skill, after which the Apostle comes down to earth, to the simple, everyday doings and virtues of the Christian and his relation to his fellow men. "Let love be without dissimulation," he says, "abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good; be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another, not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessities of saints, given to hospitality."

It is of this last phrase I wish to speak for a moment: "Given to hospitality." And the original is even stronger, literally pursuing hospitality. We say of a man *"he's given to drink,"* or *"he's given to dope,"* or *"he's given to lust,"* or *"he's given to profanity."* We mean that the man is the slave of these things. He's addicted to them. The word addicted is usually used in a sinister sense: *addicted to vice,* we say. Its commendable equivalent I suppose would be our word devoted. A man is devoted to science or to music or to art. And the Apostle calls us to this gracious and generous ideal, "Be devoted to hospitality."

The word hospitality is a simple word. It means just plain simple kindness, especially kindness to the stranger. It is derived from the Latin root *hospes,* a stranger. We say of a person, *"he's a hospitable fellow,"* meaning he is affable, courteous, considerate. It is the same root as our word host or hostage or hospital. A hospital literally is a place where kindness is shown; that is the radical meaning of the word. The good Samaritan was a hospitable neighbor. In the Alps the mountain climber finds, at different stages of his journey, the hospice. They are warm, cheery, comfortable resting places for the tired pilgrim of the heights.

We might apply the words to the church. Every church should be preëminently a hospitable place. Some one has called the Church of God a "league of pity." I thing it was George Matheson. Certainly a most suggestive and splendid phrase! Think of the sick and the tired and the friendless. Think of the

homeless in this great homeless city. Think of the bruised and bleeding hearts needing the soft and tender touch. "A league of pity!" Has it ever occurred to you how much greater consideration we show to our guests under our own roof, than we do oftentimes to these same people in the house of prayer? Some one comes to visit you. You are pleased to see them. You offer them the best seat; you invite them to break bread with you. You give them the warmest kind of a welcome. But how often we leave our courtesy at home when we enter the gates of Zion. I have always felt that about the only kind word that can be spoken for rented pews in a church is that it gives a chance to show Christian hospitality. "I need only two sittings," a member said to me, "but I rent six so that I can invite strangers." There are many who are telling us that coldness in the sanctuary has done more harm to the progress of the kingdom than any other one thing. I am not nearly as much afraid myself of heresy as I am of inhospitality. Because I feel that the latter has done infinitely more harm. We have lost the working man largely on this account. Rightly or wrongly he feels he is not wanted. The spirit of Christ and the spirit of caste have nothing whatever in common.

It ought not to be possible to attend any church that calls itself a Christian church without being conscious of some indescribable, intangible drawing toward every worshiper present. There ought to be an atmosphere in the place that is unmistakable, something searching and pervading and stimulating. The most noticeable thing about any place of worship

ought to be, Behold how these people love one another. "How amiable are Thy tabernacles!" "How sweet and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." No worshiper should throw himself down in his pew on Sunday morning as if he owned the pew and the building and the preacher and the choir and the whole pious establishment. A church is not a Pullman car nor an opera house nor a box office. It is our Father's house and we are all His beloved and welcome children. We are all members of one great catholic family. The greatest calamity that can happen to any congregation is to lose the passion for brotherhood, to become a religious coterie with cold and formal traditions. Because that kind of thing chills and freezes all spirituality. It should be our aim to break up every such deadly conspiracy of ice. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus and the poorest church in our city is the church that has no Andrews. If we live for ourselves, our life will be a brief one, and it will be an unhappy one. There will be nothing but leaves. We sit around the Lord's Table. What does that mean? It means fellowship; it means communion; it means harmony; it means equality; it means unity; it means love. It means that here we are all on the level. As "One Increasing Purpose" puts it, it means the Kingdom of Heaven spirit. "We are all one in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Or look at the words from another angle. Consider them from the angle of receptivity. Because there are many kinds of hospitality. There is such a thing as hospitality to truth and we should be sincerely and

passionately devoted to that. Our lot has been cast in the glare of these modern days, and we have felt the quickening thought of the age. The church must be true. She must be governed by the spirit of truth. She must love truth above all things else. I am anxious to emphasize this because there are scores of people in our churches to-day that seem to be afraid of the truth. Some are hide-bound in mind. They are impervious to new ideas. The clammy grip of the dead past is upon them. They cleave to antiquated forms, antiquated confessions, antiquated valuations.

Is it not a most humiliating thing, for instance, to listen to some ill-informed preacher when he belittles modern learning? I have heard them do it, and it makes one very uncomfortable. I have heard them pour ridicule on the researches of science. I have heard them raise a titter when the word evolution was mentioned. Time and again such narrowness has driven earnest thoughtful young men away. A great scholar said only the other day: "Why, sir, it is orthodoxy that is killing the church," and by orthodoxy he did not mean soundness of faith but unwillingness to inspect new visions. Instance Joseph Priestley, a great clergyman and a great chemist. He was driven out here to the wilds of America because of his love for and loyalty to what he believed to be the truth. To-day there is a statue to his memory in Birmingham, the very town where he was mobbed, and on the very spot where his house was pulled down; and within a stone's throw of that statue there is a great university teach-

ing the very things that he stood for one hundred and fifty years ago.

We cannot fetter the modern spirit of inquiry. We must not try. We cannot stem it any more than we can stem the tides. All truth is God's truth. Nature is one of God's bibles, in which He makes known His will. Whoever is afraid of truth does not believe in God. If we love our opinions more than we love the truth then woe to us. We will harm no one so much as ourselves. Paul warns us against science falsely so called, but the science he refers to is not science as we know it to-day. The science of Paul's day was nothing but a jargon of mystical and superstitious philosophy. If Paul were living to-day he would be the very best friend of true science. The God of nature and the God of revelation are one God. I like the way that Beecher once put it. When Henry Ward Beecher was asked if he was a Calvinist, he replied that he was, in the sense of holding and teaching the doctrines that Calvin would have taught if he had lived in our day. We often hear quoted the words of John Robinson. They were addressed to the Pilgrim Fathers 260 years ago in the *Mayflower:* "The Lord has yet more light to break forth from His holy Word." And then he went on to speak of the Calvinists and these were his words: "They stick where Calvin left them, a mistake much to be deplored, for though Calvin and Luther were shining lights, yet God had not revealed His whole will to them, and were they now living, they would be as ready to embrace further light as what they had received." The warning is

needed still. We must be willing to welcome every new truth of scholarship and make room for it in our categories. Tradition is a priceless blessing to inherit but its true place is behind us, not before. Tradition is all right but if science contradicts tradition, then good-by tradition. Criticism has given us a new order and we might just as well step into line. Because it is perfect madness to fight the spirit of honest investigation and reverent research.

So let us be careful lest we be found fighting against truth. He who fights against truth fights against God. If a thing is false it will soon be swept aside; you simply cannot keep it alive, but if it is true you cannot stifle it or throttle it. Paul says the things that cannot be shaken will remain. "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." Giordano Bruno was burned as an infidel in Ragmarket Square in Rome three hundred years ago, but the real infidels were the priests who burned the body of a great thinker, a man who was willing to die for his belief. To-day pilgrims from all over the world seek his statue on the spot where his ashes fell. Bruno did not believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation and he was willing to go to the stake for his convictions. If history proves anything, it proves this, that some so-called heretics are really the prophets of the living God.

When a lad, I was told to accept what the Bible taught. Then when I inquired "What does the Bible teach?" a catechism was put into my hand with marvelous questions and super-marvelous answers. It told me what the Bible taught. Who framed these ques-

tions and answers? Fallible men. But might not they be mistaken? Might not their judgment be sometimes at fault? They certainly were not inspired. They were great men, good men, but they were not infallible men. Look at the great Presbyterian Church to-day. She is on the verge of a volcano simply because there is a group of short-sighted, narrow-minded men in her fold to whom every new truth is unwelcome. Dr. Fosdick loves the Bible. He loves it as the very word of God. His quarrel is not with the Bible but with the interpretation of the Bible. He believes that many of the dogmas taught by the church are unscriptural. He does not believe, for instance, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. Many of us still continue to accept this great historic article. We believe that Jesus Christ was a miracle. We believe His resurrection was a miracle. We believe His life was a miracle. We believe His birth was a miracle. But then some of the saintliest scholars and humblest disciples and sweetest Christians in the world to-day take the stand that he does. And who are we to read such noble men out of the fold? It is almost a hundred years ago, in the year 1828 to be exact, that the school board of Lancashire, Ohio, passed this resolution in answer to a request for the use of the schoolhouse for a debate on the practicability of railroads:

"You are welcome to use the schoolroom to debate all proper questions in, but such things as railroads and telegraphs are impossibilities and rank infidelity. There is nothing in the Word of God about them. If

God had designed that His intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of fifteen miles an hour by steam, He would have foretold it through His holy prophets. It is a device of Satan to lead immortal souls astray."

How perfectly childish to keep on fighting the spirit of modernism! We see it in nations; China, for instance! China is an illustration of a great nation, that has built up a great wall around her boundaries, hoping in this way to shut out every invasion of new light. Japan, on the other hand, has shown herself ready to welcome every promising arrival. She has sent her young men to the four corners of the earth to survey and study and bring back every civilizing influence that is likely to make her people and her nation great. Let us not deceive ourselves. The question of intellectual hospitality is a far-reaching matter. It is far-reaching because there is a suspicion abroad that preachers are not always frank and open with their people, that they have an exoteric doctrine for their public utterances and an esoteric confession privately for their friends; that they are echoes, not voices; that they have lost the old prophetic accent; that they are bound, most of them, in an ironclad armor of the sixteenth century which leaves no room to grow. "Ministers do not believe one-half they preach," said a glib young critic the other day. That is a startling indictment. If it be true, we are of all men most pitiable. So let us, I insist, be open-minded. Let us not be afraid. Let us not tremble for the ark of God. Let

us not be forever turning a deaf ear to every new voice. Let us remember the words of Gamaliel: "If this counsel be of men it will come to naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." Henry Eighth called himself "Fidei Defensor," Defender of the Faith. And many a better man than Henry has stood up, as he believed, to defend the faith or the truth. But truth needs no defense. Truth can stand alone. Truth is well able to take care of herself. Defending the truth is like a warrior defending his shield. The truth is to defend us, not we it. When Whittier was a young man no hymns were allowed in the old Quaker meeting house where he sat. But at his funeral some of his own sweet lyrics were sung. His body was borne tenderly out into the garden because the house was too small to accommodate the mourners. The old objection to hymns and music was forgotten; the hard wooden benches were left behind as the sorrowing people all filed out into God's fresh air, and sang the songs of Zion under the elm trees.

And that leads us to one more angle of observation; Hospitality to our Lord! Giving Him absolute right of way in our lives. Full surrender. The most hospitable being is God. He seeks to come into the life of every child. He stands at the door seeking admittance. He will not force the lock. He knocks and waits. He's been waiting a long time for some of us. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man open the door I will come in and sup with him and he with Me." He will not come in until we are willing for every evil thing to depart. He asks not a

niggardly but an abundant entrance. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Lift up the windows of light, my brother!
Lift high and wide;
The balmy morning is bracing, tonical
Orient-eyed;
And a glad tide
Of song flows from full-voiced tree tops
Hard beside.

Swing back the shutters of life, my sister!
Swing them afar;
The blush of dawn is painting the pansy,
Paling the star
While fingers are
Streaking the eastern heavens with
Bolt and bar.

Open the door of your heart then, sinner!
Make Him your guest;
The darkness He'll scatter, the doubt
remove,
The sin arrest;
Sunshine and zest
He'll be at morn, at nightfall peace and
Last the best.

XIV

"Thy Touch Has Still Its Ancient Power"

"Lord if thou wilt thou canst make me clean."

Luke 5:12.

THE story is told by all the Synoptists. And there are variations in the way it is told that convince us that the story must be true. The variations are in non-essentials. When it comes to the things that are really vital there is complete and even verbal agreement. Matthew says, "After He came down from the mountain behold there came a leper." Luke, "it came to pass when He was in a certain city behold a man full of leprosy." While Mark makes no note either of time or place, simply stating "And there came a leper."

Mark begins his story of the life of Jesus with Jesus a man full grown and a healer of disease. Only twenty-two verses of his gospel are written when he plunges right into this ministry of healing. The Master meets a man in the synagogue with an unclean spirit, a man fit for a madhouse, and He makes the man whole. Next we read of His coming into Peter's house and finding his wife's mother sick of a fever, and forth-

with lifting her up and causing the fever to leave her. And then Mark goes on to record how after sunset He kept on ministering to the sick and casting out devils—all in this first chapter.

But when it comes to the heart of the story there is not a trace of disagreement. All three evangelists report the same facts. Even the gestures noted are the same. The leper threw himself on the ground on his face. So all of them observe. "And Jesus stretched forth His hand and touched him." All observing this too! And we must not fail to appreciate what it meant. Such a rash demonstration must have fairly astounded the people. The very idea of touching a leper! Besides it was a bad case because Luke tells us the man was full of leprosy. There he was standing afar off and crying, "Unclean, Unclean!" The very house in which the poor fellow lived was defiled. Anything that he came in contact with was polluted and had to be purified by the priest before it could be used again. His was a loathsome case, fingers falling off, face all splotched with white sores till it was scarcely human in appearance, voice cracked, for even the leper's voice is affected, head bare, lip covered. Everybody knew that to touch a leper was forbidden by the law. Leprosy means the decomposition of the vital juices and the corroding of the flesh. It does not manifest itself in the child but in the adult. The leper had no friends. The very dogs barked and shrank away. The man was dead to society. And yet they all chronicle the fact that the Master reached out His hand and touched him.

And then the words spoken. They are always identically phrased: "Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean." And the same answer in every case returns, "I will, be thou clean." And immediately the leprosy departed. It is worth noting that Mark stresses this idea of immediacy. He adds, "as soon as He had spoken." "And immediately as soon as He had spoken the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed."

Such then is the familiar story. It bears on its very face the stamp of veracity. The miracle that was wrought, the words that were spoken, the gestures that were used, the impression that was conveyed—they all have about them a simplicity, a reality, a sincerity, an accent of genuineness that cannot be denied. So let us look a little more closely at the incident and the lessons it is intended to teach.

Consider first of all that expression, "He was moved with compassion." It is the first recorded instance in the gospels where we meet these words. And the verb is a strong one; literally "He trembled all over with compassion." The evangelists seldom tell us how Jesus felt. They give us His words but rarely His feelings. And it is Mark who speaks more frequently of the feelings of Jesus than any of the other three. Luke speaks but once of our Lord's compassion, in the case of the widow of Nain. It is Mark who tells us how He was moved with pity when He saw the multitude as sheep without a shepherd. Christ had compassion with sickness, with hunger, with ignorance, with poverty, with spiritual need. These things smote His heart and it is Matthew and Mark, and especially

Mark, who are always drawing our attention to it. When He saw this poor unfortunate, He trembled all over with emotion. And the emotion arose not only for his own sake but because of the great army that he represented. He saw a vast procession of lepers girdling the globe. He saw the high tide of sickness that was washing the shores of human need. We see the wave that breaks at our feet, but He saw the ocean. We have a vague idea that there is a great surge of sorrow in the world, but not until it comes to our own doors are we mightily impressed. The Master had that sweep of vision that could summon up all the lepers. And so His heart ached and bled.

Consider too a little more intimately that other expression, "He put forth His hand and touched him." So often this idea is found in the gospels. So many of our Lord's miracles are wrought by laying his hands on the sick. He laid His hand on the deaf and dumb lad, we are told, thrust his fingers into his ears and said, "Be opened." He laid His hand on the sightless sockets of the blind man who was healed gradually. He laid His hand on the demoniac boy at the foot of the mountain. "He took the little children up in His arms, laid His hands on them and blessed them." One can hardly read the sacred page without being pulled up short with this statement, "He laid His hands on them."

Can we not see in it the swift sympathy of the man? It was the play of His human feelings. Here was a poor homeless excommunicated mortal, cut off from everything and everybody. No hand-clasp had been

his for years. Quite possibly he had felt no kiss of affection since he was a child. Everybody backed away from him in revulsion. If he had a wife he was not allowed to live with her. If he had children he was not allowed to play with them. Alone he had been walking with that rag over his face and that cry "Unclean" on his lips, lest any one should come near him. How he must have hungered for a human touch! Whatever the origin of the disease may be, the Jews regarded it as contagious. And Christ comes and looks on him and goes up and pulls down the wall of separation and stretches out His holy hands and lays them on the poor fellow's sores. What a thrill it must have given him!

I think it was a mark of heavenly sympathy. And the lesson is clear. We are to reach out our hands too. There are times when the clasp of the hand will do far more good than a whole trunk full of sermons. All the soup kitchens and free lunches in the world cannot take the place of real brotherhood. You can knock a fellow down with a kindness if you fling it at his head like a snowball. Here is John Ruskin: Walking through Whitechapel he would see sights that made his heart sick. One day a beggar accosted him and asked him for an alms. Feeling in his pocket, he said, "I'm sorry, brother, I cannot help you, but I haven't a penny of change." "You have helped me," the beggar cried, "you called me brother." If we are going to really help men we must get down to their level. We must not shrink with horror from the filth that we see. We must not tuck our skirts in and go

around on tiptoe pointing our finger. We must be mighty careful lest we give an impression of any feeling of superiority. We must rather clasp them by the hand with a warm grip and tell them by that very grip that we love them and want to help them.

"'Tis the human touch in this world that counts,
The touch of your hand and mine,
Which means far more to the fainting heart
Than shelter and bread and wine.

"For shelter is gone when the night is o'er,
And bread lasts only a day,
But the touch of the hand and the sound of the voice
Sing on in the soul alway."

Consider too the man's faith in our Lord's authority. He did not doubt the Master's power; what troubled him was His willingness. Here there was a hesitancy, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst." Jesus has the power. Can He be persuaded to use it? It needs to be borne in mind that this was the first recorded case of leprosy that the great Physician had met. He had cured fever and had cast out devils but thus far no leper had been healed.

Men have no difficulty in believing in the power of God. They see it all about them. God and power are well-nigh convertible terms. The savage who bows down before his wooden idol is moved to do so because he feels that this idol has some strange and baleful

influence over his life. All the gods of mythology had power. Jove could hurl thunderbolts. Mars was the god of war heavily armed. Mercury could guide the shades of the dead to their final resting place. They all had power, every last one of them.

There are three great doxologies in the New Testament. "Now unto Him who is able to stablish you" (Romans 16:25). Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). "Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling" (Jude 24). All three begin in the same way, "Now unto Him who is able." It is a triumphant statement of God's power. But this poor leper adds another thought, You are able, Lord, if You are only willing. It is not difficult to believe in the power of God, but to get firmly lodged in men's hearts the firm conviction of the love of God, that He is more willing to give gifts to us than earthly parents are to their children—well, that sometimes is a formidable task.

And the great attack upon religion to-day is directed right here. It is against the love of God that the guns of the enemy are turned. In a world so full of cruelty how can God be good, we hear men say. This is the stock interrogation of unbelief. With so many bloody threads woven into the texture of things, how can He be kind? Does not every living thing feed upon some other living thing? Does not the starfish live upon the shellfish and the pickerel upon the starfish and the osprey upon the pickerel and the eagle upon the osprey? Is not the ocean bed a vast Colosseum, the floor of which

literally reeks with blood? Is not every living creature armed? Is not nature red in tooth and claw? The ring snake devours the frog and the ophi snake devours the ring snake, and does it in seemingly a very cruel manner, the tussle occupying sometimes the best part of an hour, as he clamps his victim with his venomous jaws and so tires him out. Have you ever watched a wood worm boring its way through the trunk of a tree? And then did you see the woodpecker with sharp beak tapping on the surface of the tree trying to locate the hollow nest where the little worm lies? And then did you watch the hungry hawk come swooping down attracted by the tapping? And then did you observe the cat stealing along the fence and getting ready for his deadly spring? These facts are all about us. They cannot be disclaimed. Things are not cemented in this world with maple syrup.

But then another thought arises. There is a sentimentalism which makes reptiles and fish feel like men and women. We must not read our human sensitiveness into every living thing. Nature is not nearly as red and ruthless as she is usually painted. She has many ways of alleviating the agony. As we go down in the life scale, pain diminishes. Worms and jellyfish do not suffer. We are not attempting to ignore ugly facts. No use putting mustard in one's mouth and claiming it isn't hot. Mustard is always hot, and nature is always relentless. But there is a healing virtue in both. And there are at least hints in nature's case that the power is being mercifully administered and leniently enforced.

And anyway that aside, what does it prove? Does it make love any less divine? Is the divinity of power greater than the divinity of love? Contrariwise is it not all the other way? Is not the latter infinitely the greater? Is not the very glory of our faith that love is the great supreme thing? Many there are who seem to think that the great attribute of God is His might. It is here that the Westminster Catechism definition puts the emphasis: "God is a spirit, infinite and eternal and unchangeable in His power." But the error is fundamental. God's power does not come first; it does not even come second. The order should be: first love, then holiness, then power.

Well, this is a touching story and it comes home to us all. Father Stanton in his commentary on the passage plays the theme with variations. How many a poor discouraged soul broken in health has gone down on his knees and said, "Lord if Thou wilt Thou canst make me strong. I want to be well: I want to be strong. I seem to have had nothing but sickness and pain all my life; I've been an invalid for years." How many have spent their thousands and tens of thousands in search of health!

Or if it has not been health it has been something else. Maybe unhappiness or failure or infelicity or soul ache of some kind or other. How many have cried, "Lord if Thou wilt Thou canst make me happy. I am not happy. My spirit is broken. The cruel world has gone against me. It has treated me hard. My home is gone, and I am heavy of heart."

But this poor fellow did not ask for happiness or

success or smile of fortune. His cry was, "Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean." Wonderful prayer! The faith of it! And it prevailed. Surely a prayer such as this must always prevail. The Master takes up his own words and returns them laden with hope and promise: "I will, be thou clean, and immediately the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed."

There is a little poem of a bird that has broken free from its cage and has flown up into the sky. And the bird asks God why He kept her in a cage so long:

"Up on God's window sill
Carolling high and shrill
Shaken with ecstasy
At last clung my spirit free.
God showed His glorious head.
Singing to Him I said:
Who was it did me wrong?
Why was I caged so long,
Tangled with wings and strings
Under the stars?
God said, "I made the wings:
You made the bars!"

XV

"By Some Clear Winning Word of Love"

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold
in pictures of silver."

Proverbs 25 : 11.

And first just a word as to the meaning of the verse. Scholars tell us that the word for fitly literally signifies wheels. The marginal reading says "a word spoken on wheels." And that suggests two ideas.

It may mean a word timely spoken, spoken at the right time, seasonably spoken; the idea being that of the seasons revolving. How many we know are apt to speak at the wrong time! They say the right thing, it may be, but at the wrong time. Even the wisest words if spoken at the wrong time may do more harm than good. We must confer with opportunity. We must speak opportunely. Opportunity is doing the right thing at the right time. There are occasions when even words of Scripture may be an offense. Neither the time nor the tone may be in keeping. There are not many things more difficult to do than to give wise advice wisely. The Master said, "I have yet many things to say to you but ye cannot bear them now."

Others insist that the idea is that of smoothness. How smoothly things move on wheels! The wheels of your motor car, how silently and easily they roll! There is no creak or groan or friction. Every part is ingeniously fitted together, all centering in a ball-bearing socket. It is the poetry of motion.

Goethe said to Eckerman that women are plates of silver on which men place apples of gold. He spoke as an artist. He meant that the women he created were better far than those one meets in real life. There is no such person as the "Beatrice" Dante idealized. Just as our immortal Washington is largely a "steel engraving." Goethe brought the golden apple of his art to women who were at best made of silver. But the remark is symbolic. There are golden apples of friendship as well as art that are ofttimes placed on plates of silver, maybe plates of earthenware; golden apples of love; golden apples of sacrifice; golden apples of devotion. In the verse before us the symbolism is verbal; golden apples of kindly thinking and charitable speaking. The apple tree is very rare in Palestine. Without question what the writer means is the orange tree. Have you never seen an orange tree laden with ripe golden fruit, the little balls peeping through its shiny leaves? The leaves are evergreen and look for all the world like dead silver: "Apples of gold with a background of silver." And when we put these thoughts together what a lovely picture it makes! A word fitly spoken is a delightful thing. It ministers joy and delight. Its taste is delicious, its appearance is beautiful, its blossoms are fragrant. It sweetens the air. It

cheers the heart. A word fitly spoken can do all this. It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

What wonderful thing are words! There are 450,000 in Funk & Wagnall's New Standard Dictionary. Consider how many we use every day, anywhere from two to five thousand. It has been estimated that if a man lives seventy years his conversation would fill a library of something like 4,000 volumes of three hundred pages each. Some people's vocabulary is very limited, perhaps not to more than a few hundred words. The average uneducated man, it is said, uses less than 500 words to express himself. Shakespeare, on the contrary, calls into play about 23,000 and Milton about 15,000. There are 14,000 words in the Bible.

"Words are things and a small drop of ink
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands perhaps millions
think."

Max Müller once said that the most amazing thing about the human race was the gift of language, and he certainly knew what he was talking about when he spoke on language. He was an authority on that score. He claimed that without language there could be no thought. "No thought without language, no language without thought," was the way he phrased it. "Words are the coins we use to carry on our thinking business." We get at the quality of a man's life through his language quicker than in any other way. As are the words, so is the man. "Out of the abundance fo the heart the mouth speaketh." The

New Testament speaks of a man's character as his walk and conversation. Most people, alas! are not experts in the wielding of language. It is a difficult weapon to handle. It is a sharp razor that cuts. And we cannot be too careful how we use it. "The tongue is an unruly member." Experts have tamed lions and tigers and all sorts of monsters but no expert has ever tamed the tongue.

The Bible is always telling us to watch our tongues. It is ever warning us to guard our words. It speaks of vain words, idle words, false words, kind words, wholesome words, acceptable words. "For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account." And idle here means useless, ineffectual for good. Our words must not only be not evil, they must be actively good. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue," James says. "A world of iniquity is in the tongue." And that is a very striking expression. It means that the tongue can commit any sin. The hand can be murderous, the eye can be lustful. But there is no command that the tongue cannot break. It can be murderous and lustful and profane and proud and hypocritical and cruel. No evil passion but can find lodgment and expression in the tongue. It is a fire that burns up the whole nature. Some one has said, "If you were to divide the sins of the world into two parts, half of them would be sins of the tongue." The tongue can inspire the noblest deeds of chivalry or it can let loose the most cruel shafts of deviltry. It began its deadly work in Eden and it has been at the venomous business ever since.

There is no weapon so quick and powerful as the weapon of words: no sword so sharp. What has tyranny dreaded more? What has liberty coveted more? Who can weigh what has been passed in parliaments or assemblies by the magic of words? "Help me to deal honestly with words," says Vandyke, "for they are alive." We say sometimes, "Oh, talk is cheap", "Words are but wind"; "Good words won't fill a sack." The proverbs on the subject are not at all complimentary. Perhaps the one that is most commonly quoted is, "Speech is silver, silence is golden." The idea being that if words are so dangerous we had better not use them at all. But the saying is only a half truth. There are times when silence is wicked, when to seal one's lips is a criminal shame. It is a sin to say in a fit of passion the word that hurts, but it is no less a sin to leave unspoken the word that helps and heals. Fire is a dangerous master but what a blessed kindly ministering servant!

A ship is a mighty thing but it is turned with ease by the rudder. And human life is like a ship in more ways than one. It carries its greatest peril within. When the shaft of an ocean liner breaks, it is apt to become a battering ram and gore her. "Keep thy tongue from evil," that is, from speaking evil. Because the only harm the tongue can do is when it breaks loose and runs unbridled. Then it becomes a weapon of danger within as well as without. When a thought is released it is no longer ours; it belongs to the world. It travels by radio and no reporter on the wings of lightning can catch it. No fire on the mountains in

august spreads like bad news. He who lets an ugly word drop from his mouth can never lasso it. "Under the tongue is mischief and vanity. As the tongue is so is the heart. When Mr. Edison was asked whether he ever expected to invent an instrument to see down into his neighbor's heart, his reply was, "God forbid that I should publish it to the world. "For," said he, "did we all see down into the secret thoughts of one another, human life would be no longer bearable on the earth. There would not be two friends left to trust one another, and to love one another. Family life would fly apart."

"Boys, flying kites, haul in their white-winged birds,
You cannot do that way when you're flying words,
Careful with fire is good advice I know;
Careful with words is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said."

If all this be true, how are we to know when a word is fitly spoken. What rule are we to judge by? The chapter from which our text is taken is a chapter on how to live with one another and avoid contentiousness and wrangling. It treats of talebearing and backbiting and ruling one's spirit and singing songs to the heavy hearted. There is a wise motto about repeating anything one hears. First, ask is it true, then is it necessary, and then is it kind? A word fitly spoken is all three. It is true, it is necessary, it is kind.

Is it true? Truth has been called the root of all the virtues. Few things are baser than falsehood. There is an old proverb that "Sin has many tools but a lie is the handle that fits them all." When we look down upon the troubles of the world we observe that the most of them are caused by falsehood. "I hate and abhor lying," the Psalmist says. What a wonderful teacher is science in this regard! Science is a search for the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The true scientist scorns deception. With him truth is absolute and supreme. A lie is never justifiable to the scientist—never. He has a real passion for the facts. Sometimes the question is asked, What is the greatest thing in the world? There is no doubt to the true scientist what that is. And is religion to take a lower ground than science?

Is it necessary? Sometimes we hear the expression "A mischievous tongue." It deals in mischief. It loves to create mischief. It trades in gossip, especially scandalous gossip. It exaggerates. It aims to stir up trouble, just as bad boys try to get dogs a fighting. A mischievous tongue can cut like a sword and open a wound that may straightway become infected. What striking pictures are word pictures! Here is our word sarcasm. It is derived from sarx, meaning flesh. When the Roman horseman lost his temper with his faithful dumb brute, he lifted a loaded whip and struck the creature a cruel blow that made the flesh quiver and the blood spurt. And there are those whose tongues are lashes that cut and cause bleeding. They feel impelled to pass on everything they hear. They

are incendiaries. They love to stand off and watch the blaze they start. But we should always ask ourselves, Is it necessary to pass this stuff on? What good will be gained by passing it on? What good will even I myself gain? What good will anybody gain? There are times when even kind words had better not be spoken. When Rachel weeps for her children we must not always feel it imperative on us to talk. Often it is far more considerate and sympathetic to step aside and be still.

"Words are mighty, words are living:
Serpents with their venomous stings,
Or bright angels, crowding round us,
With heaven's light upon their wings;
Every word has its own spirit,
True or false, that never dies;
Every word man's lips have uttered
Echoes in God's skies."

We will not pause to consider lips that are profane because *Hoc est alia res.* The tongue is God's gift. For it we should be profoundly grateful. How great is the sin when it is made the instrument to insult the one who gave us the gift! If the heart be sweet the language will be sweet. So many mouths are not clean. The breath is offensive, oftentimes the reason being that the vocabulary is poor. A wise man once remarked how "Dogs have more ways of expressing themselves with their tails than some men have with their tongues."

Is IT KIND? No one is justified in telling even the truth if the telling thereof is going to hurt a human

heart or soil a human reputation. If such things are likely, let him keep silent. Because a word can cut like a lancet or it can heal like balsam. "Speak the truth," the Apostle says, "but speak it in love." Some people's tongues are like the tongues of lions—very rough. If you let them lick your hand, they will soon file the skin away. Like Iago, they joy to inflict pain. Never are they so happy as when pulling a fellow mortal down. Do you recall that passage in the Purgatorio where Dante is alarmed by the shaking of the mountain? He is told that it is due to the mighty song that everybody is singing every time a soul is moved to pass upward. Surely that is the better way. For the success of one is the advantage of all.

So let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: We should aim to speak helpful words, encouraging words, cheery words. How superficial and shallow most of our converse is! How rarely it gets below the surface! How very seldom it touches the deeper things of life! It is mostly about our health and the weather and how many holes we played in par. The world is full of people who are lonely and storm-beaten and sad. They are waiting for a word of encouragement and sympathy.

"Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear winning word of love."

Many are sensitive, and some are supersensitive. They take all sorts of trouble to nurse imaginary slights. A grain of sand gets into their eye and instead of washing it away they keep on rubbing it till the

whole organ is inflamed and the eye is swollen and red and painful. Let us speak the word of cheer. Let us scatter seeds of kindness. Let us drop flowers along the way. And let us not wait. Let us do it now.

"If with pleasure you are viewing any work a man is doing,
If you like him or you love him, tell him now;
Don't withhold your approbation till the parson makes oration
As he lies with snowy lilies o'er his brow;
For no matter how you shout it, he won't really care about it;
He won't know how many tear drops you have shed;
If you think some praise is due him, now's the time to slip it to him,
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead!

"More than fame and more than money is the commend kind and sunny
And the hearty, warm approval of a friend;
For it gives to life a savor, and it makes you stronger, braver,
And it gives you heart and spirit to the end.
If he earns your praise—bestow it; if you like him—let him know it;
Let the words of true encouragement be said;
Do not wait till life is over and he's underneath the clover
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead."

XVI

"Land Where My Fathers Died"

"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's."

Matthew 22:21.

An organization was inaugurated in England during the last year by the name of Copec. It started as a conference on politics, economics and citizenship, and that is how it got its name; Copec consisting of the first letters of these words. The conference was an inquiry into the relationship existing between religion and the great secular problems that are disturbing the world. Does our political creed square with our Christian belief? Are our business standards in accord with the spirit of the Golden Rule? Are we loyal citizens of the land where our lot happens to be cast, as well as of the spiritual kingdom to which we profess to belong? These were the agenda of the conference. They are great and far-reaching questions. Let us look at them in the light of our own constitution and the practical problems before us to-day.

I. And first of all Politics. What is politics? Politics is the science of government. It is righteousness and

justice applied to human affairs. How am I to live in peace and fellowship with my fellow man—that is politics. We could not worry along in any half decent way at all were it not for politics. So that the man who speaks disparagingly of politics and boasts that he is not interested in it is like the man in the French play who expressed his surprise that he had been talking grammar all his life without ever knowing it.

There are many to-day who are saying that the preacher has no business to dabble in politics. Let him stick to his last. The pulpit is not the place to advocate amendments to the Constitution, or statutes for the states. Others draw a line between the minister as a priest and the minister as a citizen, arguing that what is improper in the one is perfectly legitimate and proper in the other. It all goes back, it would seem, to our definition of what politics really is. It is not the preacher's province to line up with any political party unless some great reform is at stake. He should be an Independent as far as that is concerned, a mugwump if you like. The question for him is not between Republicans and Democrats but as between good Republicans and bad Republicans, between good Democrats and bad Democrats, between good Prohibitionists and bad Prohibitionists, for there are good and bad here too. Let him confine himself to the great moral issues, and leave the debatable details of their application to others.

The whole trouble is that politics is so oftentimes confounded with party politics, and that to-day is an equation strange and puzzling beyond words. The

phrase has become corrupted. It has come to be mixed up with personalities and abuse. It has become a stagnant pond covered over with a scum of bigotry and prejudice and unscrupulousness. It has become a muddy road on which the traveler is almost certain to get splashed. All of which is most unfortunate. And so it transpires that many to-day are denouncing the party system and calling for its abolition. But because a thing has been abused is no good reason why it should be abolished. What good thing has not been abused? Bear in mind it is either the party system or the bloc system, or anarchy which is no system at all. Germany to-day has fourteen group organizations; France has nine; England has half a dozen. Are these countries any better off? If history shows anything, it proves that political combinations and coalitions, except in times of great crises, have never been a real success. It looks very much indeed as if party politics was inevitable and one of the conditions of party government. The existence of two great parties has gone hand in hand with human progress and human achievement. When these have broken up into fragments, then cohesion has been lost and there has been retreat.

It is not party politics but partisan politics that is the tap root of our political troubles. Sometimes we hear the expression, "Playing politics," the inference being that the game is not on the level. Many of our representatives in Congress to-day are not our representatives at all. They have been "playing politics." Many of them are nothing more than small selfish time-servers, using the people they were elected to serve. It

has been all for office and graft, nothing for honor and principle and country. It is such things as these that have dragged politics into the dirt. Abraham Lincoln once said that if our government is ever demoralized it will come from this incessant human wriggle and struggle for office, which is only another way of living without working. Here we have forty-eight individual states with their representatives playing the crooked game, voting so as to make themselves secure. One feels with the poet:

"God give us men; a time like this demands
Strong hearts, true faith and willing hands.
Men whom the lust of office cannot kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie.
For while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Wrangle in selfish strife, Lo! Freedom weeps;
Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice sleeps."

When one looks around and sees things as they are, one does not wonder sometimes that men have had such a rooted aversion to what ought to be, and was meant to be, a great and noble science—the whole procedure is so corrupt. They prefer to stand aloof. And yet is there any zone of service to-day where upright men are more needed than in the governmental arena?

How is the base thing ever to rise above the low level of votes, unless high-grade men hear the call of country and respond? Never was the old saying more true than to-day that "it is the apathy of the good that makes possible the dynasty of the bad." If the people who are capable refuse to serve, then there is nothing else to do but to fall back on the incapable. The patriot shrinks from duty and so the adventurer climbs to power. The answer of the minister who was severely criticized because his official board was no better than it was, tells the whole tale. "I know that," he said, "but if the good Lord is going to have a church down in my quarter He must make it out of the stuff that's willing to act."

Howard Crosby once remarked, "To let politics become a cesspool and then to avoid it because it is a cesspool is a double crime." The greatest cataclysm of modern history, until our own World War, was the French Revolution. And what was the cause of that awful convulsion? One line tells everything. It was caused because the best men in their love of ease repudiated their responsibility, and turned to the Robespierres and Marats and Dantons to come and take the scepter. They did not render unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. I make bold to claim that the man who runs away from his political privileges is a cowardly traitor. He is deserting the high post of duty. Political freedom is vital to the development of all our great historic institutions. All history corroborates the fact that only as political freedom is established can science and religion and literature thrive. It was

among the free citizens of Athens and not among the military slaves of Sparta that Greek art and philosophy and culture flourished. Do we realize that military Sparta has left us no literature, while Athens has bequeathed to us a literature which even to-day is one of the wonders of the world? And if one can read the signals of the future, one is tempted to say that the time is coming when politics will be a coveted privilege, when the very best men will turn aside from the piling up of great possessions and serve their city and state and fatherland. All along the line the call to-day is for men who can think and plan and execute. Because, as Dr. Ely once put it, "Every political question is a social question and every social question is at heart a religious question."

II. Then there is the question of Economics. The preacher's duty toward economic questions is the same as toward political questions. He must not be a partisan. He must see the possible good in all—in individualism, in paternalism, in socialism, in labor unions, in government control. He must see both sides of every controversy. The very moment he becomes a partisan he loses power.

Many are the changes that have come over religious thought during the past fifty years, but it seems that no change is so radical as the transfer of interest from the other world to this. Give us something for to-day, is the cry we hear. Tell us how to remedy the social evils that are around us, especially how to lessen poverty and disease and unemployment. The great problem the average man wants to see solved is, how

can the masses be made more comfortable? He is not greatly concerned about any generous draft on the bank of Heaven; what he wants is a fairer deposit in the banks of earth. We all confess to an economic disarrangement in the world to-day, and how to rectify and adjust it, how to inform society with the spirit of justice is the problem of the hour. Everybody knows, who has thought seriously at all, that religion these days is undergoing a social revival. Where our fathers discussed their relations to God, we are analyzing our relations to our fellow men. The questions that men are asking to-day are not the questions our fathers were asking a hundred years ago. Men to-day are not so much interested in justification as in justice. There are a goodly number of theologians even who are contending that if Christ were to return to earth to-day, His interest would be in social rather than ecclesiastical matters. The object of Christianity is acknowledged by every thinking man at the present hour to be the moralizing of our human relations, and the reconstruction of a juster and happier and more peaceable world.

No thoughtful man, it would seem, can be satisfied with the present state of human affairs. It is based too largely on selfishness. What is the fundamental evil? There are two answers to that question. One is poverty, the other is slavery. Let us look at this a moment and suppose we start with the family. Because the family is the corner stone of human society. And that leads at the very outset to the housing problem. We are told that five per cent of our working

classes live in slums. We are told furthermore that here in New York City anywhere from fifty to seventy-five homes are maintained for girls whose wages will not allow them to live in ordinary dwellings. The housing problem is a question of poverty. The slum is the standing stigma on our economic life. "It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible disgrace." It is a disgrace because it does not need to be. It is the scandal of our economic system. It is society's cancerous cell. The time is certainly coming, and coming soon, when it will disappear. Surely it is a dirty blot on our civilization in a world as wide and roomy as this, where light and air and sunshine fairly force themselves into every cranny, that people should have to live and rear their children in dark, dingy, unhealthy holes, huddled together like animals, in ignorance and squalor and want.

To be sure this is only part of a larger question. Our whole industrial system is at stake. And a good many are coming to realize that the key to the problem is a religious one. It is not a matter of the sword but of the spirit. The whole question goes back to the family. The feeling we have in our homes must be carried outside our homes. No child of ours, if we can help it, will go hungry or cold or naked or loveless. And when we have transferred that feeling to the entire family of man, the social question will be solved. The common good must take precedence of private gain. It is simply building up the state on the mind of Christ.

The Government can do a great deal to help, but

consecrated leadership can do a great deal more. The crying need of the hour is the baptism of both Capital and Labor with the spirit of the Golden Rule. We cannot change the system until we change the ideals of the men who control the system. A great employer can do more to remove the causes of industrial unrest than all the politicians or the theologians. Think what it means to give a high standard of ethics to a factory where thousands of people are earning their daily bread. Laws will not do it. Nothing will do it but a certain spirit. A headmaster gives tone to his school. Indeed, the school to-day is very largely the headmaster. I have seen one man change the whole atmosphere of an industrial plant in a time of strike. You cannot conquer selfishness and materialism by force. Nothing will ever succeed but justice and fair play and good will and brotherly love.

Mr. Bernard Shaw says the Golden Rule is that there is no golden rule. It is not a rule of gold but of spirit. A few months ago a man distributed among his employees $600,000 worth of stock. He calls it the Golden Rule in business. He believes, as many others do, that profit-sharing is the ideal condition under the competitive system. He does it in the name of Christ. He might well do it in the name of America. And the hours of women workers were reduced to seven a day instead of eight. And this is the reason he gave:

"I simply want to say that it seems to me to be absurd and an insult to the Master Himself to talk about building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth in church

and religious meetings and then when we come to our factories and industries claim the whole thing is impractical."

Now whatever we may think of this, it is certainly putting the human above the machine. It is proclaiming to the world the fact that we are all comrades in a great task, aye in a great struggle. And the point again is that this economic question at bottom is a religious question. It is something that concerns the church. And one of the saddest things about the whole business is that the church is rarely consulted. It is quietly assumed that we have nothing to contribute, nothing to say, at least nothing worth listening to. Men turn everywhere else for light except to the Bible and the church. The church is only a group of goody goody pious idealists. It is a stinging rebuke to us who call ourselves followers of the man who really loved the people. We have been quarreling over incense and vestments and fundamentalism and modernism and creeds and medieval mummery and all that sort of moldy moth-eaten stuff that nobody cares a picayune about, instead of trying to lead a bewildered bleeding world out of its materialism and selfishness and strife and war and avarice and greed. When a General in the English army says he will support any government that will keep war going on (and when it has ceased, stir it up again), it is time for us to tell that man he is no better than a naked barbarian, and some of us would say not half as good. It reminds one of Von Moltke when he said that the hope of universal peace was a

dream, and then he added these awful words, "not even a beautiful dream."

III. Then there is the question of Citizenship. Every good Christian is a good citizen. Surely a Christian cannot rightly claim the privileges of citizenship without fulfilling its functions. Are we to get all we can from the community and give nothing in return? Are we to absorb all the blessings of a well-governed nation and not discharge any share of its obligations? Is that the teaching of our faith? A good citizen is an ornament to the place to which he belongs. What a luster Burns has conferred upon Ayr or Livingstone upon Glasgow! How many of you will go to Stratford this summer! A man of genius may make the name of his town known to the farthest corners of the earth. Think of our own Rochester and the Mayo boys.

The Duke of Wellington once said that "patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel." I am not sure that I understand just what he meant when he spoke these words. Probably he had in mind those people who are always prattling about their patriotism, but who are violating the laws of their country every day in their own lives. We all know there is a good deal that labels itself patriotism that is of a very unsavory stamp. A true patriot loves his country's good name more than he does its wealth or commercial greatness. And a true patriot never hates any other country. He can say with John Wesley, "The world is my parish." The man who sows the seeds of hate between nations

to-day is not a patriot but a parasite. He is a jingo, a conspirator. "Charity begins at home, but it is a mighty poor brand that ends at home." When Congress passed the Immigration Bill, Admiral Yamamoto, former Premier of Japan, said: "No amount of preaching or missionary work can convince us now that Christianity is an effective prevention of wars and racial struggle." The gospel of brotherhood has received its biggest check in 100 years.

And a true patriot does not hesitate to condemn his country when he feels she is in the wrong. When Pitt tried to prevent England from making war on the United States he was branded as a traitor. But history stamps him to-day a great Englishman. When John Bright thundered against the Crimean War he was mocked and jeered at. But history to-day proves that he was right and his critics wrong. The struggle was a tragic blunder which no one now defends. The true patriot will stand up for his fatherland when it is right. "My country right or wrong" is the Devil's patriotism. In the great words of Daniel O'Connell, "Nothing can be politically right which is morally wrong."

Now there is a widespread feeling to-day that the tone of our citizenship is below par. We are suffering from high blood pressure. On all sides we hear grave doubts as to the future of Democratic government. The demagogue for one thing is with us, and there is no greater danger to our institutions than the demagogue. And, unfortunately, our land is full of them,

there were several in Congress. Consider for one thing the apathy of the average voter as to his civic responsibility. When we read that only forty-four per cent of the voting strength of our country went to the ballot box in 1923, and that it only represented fifty-seven per cent of our voting strength, when we read that in New York City almost as many stayed away from the polls as voted, that in California more stayed away than voted, while in Louisiana five stayed at home to every one who registered his franchise, is it to be wondered at that we have bosses and government by the machine? When the reins of power pass from fewer to fewer, from small committees to still smaller ones, the boss is inevitable off there at the end.

Or consider our disrespect of law. We all know, for history is clear on the point, that disrespect for law is the supreme danger of all republican rule. It is the one grave peril to a democracy. The big problem before the American people to-day is not the Eighteenth Amendment, for that is only part of a larger issue. There is more at stake than the Eighteenth Amendment. The big problem before our country to-day is this: Are we determined to enforce what we have written into the Constitution? That is the point at stake. And it is the Alpha and Omega of all good government. The denial of it thunders out the failure of democracy. Contempt for authority will steal away any nation's birthright. Of course when it comes to the liquor traffic we know what to expect. The liquor traffic has always been a criminal. It has always been associated with crime. And it has not changed its

nature within the last seven years. It takes more than seven years for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots. We know from the past what to expect to-day. We have had some experience. We cannot be fooled along that line.

Let us put the whole matter into a nutshell. The great issue before us to-day is: Is every man to be a law unto himself? We all want to see the law of justice administered. We all wish to see the law administered that protects human property and human life. It is quite possible and quite likely that we do not all cherish some of the laws that govern us, but our business is not to pick out the ones that suit us best and scrap the rest. Law should be obeyed because it is the law. The provisions of the Constitution are sacred; not some of them, all of them. When people of influence break one law, what is to prevent those who have no influence breaking another? The man of means wants his home safe and his business plant secure, but how can he expect that if he deliberately scouts some clause that runs counter to his thirsty fancy? We have many classes in the United States but we have none who are exempt from the law. The Republic cannot survive half obedient, half defiant. As Patrick Henry said in his message to the people of Massachusetts: "I am not a Virginian, I am an American." Or as a greater than Patrick Henry said: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's."

Professor Leighton in his book "Religion and the

Mind of To-day," has a chapter on "The Recrudescence of Paganism" in which he closes with these words:

"Why should we boast ourselves and swell with pride because God has given to us the greatest natural opportunity that has ever fallen to the lot of a nation? We have, indeed, with unexampled headlong energy transformed the natural face of this great continent, and even prodigally wasted our resources. But what abiding contributions have we made to the spiritual heritage of the race? In other words, what have we achieved in those realms of human production that cannot be weighed and appraised by the senses? I do not know any lesson that needs to be driven home more insistently and forcibly to our people than that Athens, the intellectual mother of our culture, was, in the days of her greatest glory, a city less than half the size of Buffalo, and that Palestine, the fountain-head of the redeeming ethical and religious powers in our life, had a smaller area than the State of Vermont. Amidst our great swelling words of 'progress,' it is well to call to mind such facts, and to ask ourselves what shall insure the spiritual immortality of our nation, when in the political vicissitudes of history it shall have gone the way of all peoples? Politically, the Israel of Isaiah and Jesus, and the Athens of Sophocles and Plato have long since fallen before the scythe of Time, but spiritually they will endure as long as the light of reflective thought, and the spur of moral and religious aspiration move in the soul of man. Their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, their

acts endure in the everlasting movements of the spirit. Shall we seek for our nation a like remembrance and persistence, or shall we be content to leave our records in the dust to which all merely material achievement eventually returns?"

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